WONDERS OF ENGRAVING

BY
GEORGES
DUPLESSIS

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THE WONDERS OF ENGRAVING.

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From the early Woodcut in the possession of Earl Spencer.

THE

WONDERS

OF

ENGRAVING.

BY

GEORGES DUPLESSIS.

ILLUSTRATED WITH TEN REPRODUCTIONS IN AUTOTYPE ;
AND THIRTY-FOUR WOOD-ENGRAVINGS,
BY P. SELLIER.

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

LONDON:
SAMPSON LOW, SON, AND MARSTON,
CROWN BUILDINGS, 188, FLEET STREET.
1871.

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NOTE.

The present volume is a translation of *Les Merveilles de la Gravure*, by M. GEORGES DUPLESSIS, which has already appeared in the well-known Series now in course of publication by Messrs. L. Hachette et Cie.

The author has made Engraving and Engravers his special study ; his chapters on the Italian, Flemish, German, and French schools will, we think, be considered exhaustive ; and nothing can be clearer than his account of the processes employed : but he has scarcely done justice to this country—many of our most illustrious names are unnoticed, whilst others are brought into undue prominence. This omission may, we hope, be rectified by the publication of a separate volume on English Engravers, which is evidently much needed.

The translator need only add an earnest hope that the present version of *Les Merveilles de la Gravure* may be acceptable to all lovers of this important and deeply interesting branch of Art.

N. R. E. M.

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THE WONDERS OF ENGRAVING.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN OF ENGRAVING.

BEFORE reviewing the various schools of Engraving, and studying the growth of this art in each separate country, it seems expedient to us to recapitulate in a few words, the very diverse and often contradictory opinions put forth concerning its origin. By doing this, we shall avoid unnecessary repetition, and, without occupying ourselves unduly with the purely archæological question, we can ascertain the characteristics of each school, examine the works worthy of attention executed in each country, and enumerate the artists whom future generations will remember and judge. We must not forget to say that we intend to occupy ourselves solely with that kind of Engraving from which impressions are taken; and, purposely neglecting ancient engraving, we commence our work only at

the period when, Printing having been discovered, Engraving became a new art and produced important results.

Let us bear in mind, to begin with, that there are two processes, very different in their execution, although similar enough in their results—engraving on metal and engraving on wood; in the first, all that is to be impressed on the paper is cut in sunken lines on the metal; the second involves work of a diametrically opposite kind; all that is to appear in the proof must be raised on the wood, and the graver must carefully remove all those parts which the printer's press is not to touch.

Whole volumes might be written if we wished to discuss or even to review the opinions put forth by scholars on the origin of engraving. Every country has taken part in the discussion, and eminent men on all sides have become the champions, each of his own country. National pride has often interfered in the dispute, and it would have run the risk of becoming bitter had it descended to the arena of personalities instead of remaining in the hands of earnest workers.

The French have the greater facility for discussing the various opinions on this matter, inasmuch as they have no claim to be considered its inventors. France has indeed put forth some pretensions on this matter, and has been willing to consider one Bernard Milnet (an artist whose very name is more than problematical) the most ancient engraver; but, after a careful

investigation, this opinion is now abandoned by all, even by those who first adopted it.

It is not the same with our neighbours: for a long time the 'St. Christopher' of 1423 was thought the most ancient known example of engraving. But lately a discovery by the Baron of Reiffenberg, overthrew this opinion; and the engraving of 1418, which he obtained for the Museum of Brussels (the date of which appears to us incontestable), transported the real period of the invention five years backward. In our day, thanks to two plates printed on the leaves of a manuscript which M. Henri Delaborde has described and commented on* with remarkable clearness, we know, that in 1406, the art of wood-engraving must have existed and the printing-press been brought into use.

The history of copper-plate engraving, properly so called, has passed through the same vicissitudes. Before the Abbé Zani found in one of the collections of prints in Paris, a proof of the 'Pax of Florence,' executed in 1452 by Maso Finiguerra—as shown by the official registers—German scholars looked upon Martin Schöngauer as the true inventor of copper-plate engraving; quoting in testimony some impressions executed, according to them, about 1460. From this period, already far removed from us (as the Abbé Zani's discovery took place only at the end

* 'Gazette des Beaux-arts,' March, 1869.

of the eighteenth century), investigators have not been discouraged, and their efforts have been crowned with success. Passavant, in the 'Archives de Naumann' (4e Année, 1858, p. 1), has carefully described a figure of the Virgin, bearing date 1451. Renouvier, in a very learned pamphlet, has revealed the existence of a series of prints of the 'Passion,' executed in 1446. Persevering efforts in this direction might, without doubt, lead to some new discovery. Some day or other, we doubt not, Germany or Flanders will be proclaimed the inventor of printed engravings; and that the archives of history, examined with great care, and turned over in every possible way, will furnish a document before which every ambition must succumb. But we should be much surprised if all these patient researches led to anything more than the knowledge of a mere fact; and we shall be much mistaken if any art-object worthy of the name can be cited to contradict our theory, that it was in 1452, in Italy, at Florence, that the first really important specimen of the art of engraving appeared; an event brilliant enough to be in itself alone an historical landmark.

CHAPTER II.

ENGRAVING IN ITALY.

Engravers on Wood—Nielli—Copperplate Engraving at Florence, in the Northern Cities, at Milan, Parma, Bologna, and Rome.

THE history of engraving in Italy follows that of painting tolerably closely; many painters were also engravers, and those who did not themselves take the trouble of engraving upon metal or wood, were sufficiently greedy of fame to gather around them engravers who multiplied the works they produced under their supervision.

Wood-engraving did not in Italy, as in other countries, precede engraving on metal. It appeared at the same time. It is in printed books that we must look for the first instances of this useful art, which, when combined with the text, is peculiarly well suited to bring the author's thought visibly before the eyes, whilst the words explain it to the mind.

In Italy, wood-engraving was slower in acquiring real importance than in other countries. Although

from the first half of the fifteenth century, we find many specimens of Italian wood-engraving, recognisable solely by their style, none of these attempts bear certain dates, and it is only at the end of the fifteenth century that this form of art was seriously cultivated and practised by true artists. Until then it had been in the hands of artisans, who were more desirous of instructing the faithful than of conforming to the laws of beauty.

The most curious specimens of Italian wood-engraving are met with in a rare book called the 'Hypnerotomachia Poliphilii,' printed at Venice by the brothers Aldus, in 1499, a book in which are unfolded, amongst dreams more or less fantastic, some reflections on ideal beauty, or the theory of art, composed by Francesco Columna; this work would have run great risk of remaining in oblivion had it not been embellished by some excellent wood-engravings. This book exhibits compositions which were attributed successively to Andrea Mantegna and Giovanni Bellini, executed in a very summary fashion, but with a firmness of touch which proves that their author possessed rare knowledge of drawing. It is true that we do not here recognise the style of these two masters; but, at the same time, we do not hesitate to affirm that a superior artist alone could have guided the hand of the engraver in this work.

The sermons of Savonarola, published at Florence the day after they were delivered, also contain a

certain number of woodcuts, which reproduce with accuracy the beautiful Florentine designs of the fifteenth century. From their first appearance, these engravings had a success sufficiently great to warrant their being simultaneously employed in different publications. The plates which adorn the text of Savonarola's sermons are again found in 'L'Art de Bien Mourir,' printed at Florence, in 1513; and a diligent search would certainly discover these engravings in other publications, as they were well suited to the mystical books of the beginning of the sixteenth century.

At Rome the art of engraving on wood did not attain the same degree of beauty as in other Italian cities. The discovery of printing spread there less rapidly, and the artists of the Eternal City seem from the first to have required for their work a field larger than that offered by a book.

It was in the north, and at Venice particularly, that printers encouraged and employed the best artists of this class. Amongst books brought out in this city, special attention is due to Doni's publications, usually printed by Francesco Marcolini da Forli, and embellished by more beautiful wood-engravings than had until then appeared. We must not forget to remark that these works appeared in the middle of the sixteenth century, from 1550 to 1553, when Italian art was already at its zenith. About the same period, many engravers applied themselves to repro-

duce compositions which Giulio Campagnola and Titian himself drew for that purpose. They executed some admirable engravings—engravings properly so called, as not intended merely to adorn a book or illustrate a text, but entirely devoted to producing in fac-simile, and making popular, the works of these masters. As yet, the artist did not dream of showing his own dexterity, but occupied himself solely in faithfully transferring to the wood the design which had been confided to him. He was content (and herein lay his chief merit) to follow scrupulously the outlines traced by the pen or pencil of the painter, and he seems to be far more anxious for the glory of his model than for his own.

Among the wood-engravers who habitually took their inspiration from Titian's works, Niccolò Boldrini—an artist to whom posterity has been unjust—must take first rank.

The origin of engraving *en camaïeu* * also dates from the sixteenth century. Andrea Andreani, Ugo da Carpi, and Antonio da Trenta, the principal representatives of this new art, showed remarkable genius in their works. They copied the compositions of Raphael and of Parmigiano in preference to those of other masters, and, by means of several consecutive printings, succeeded in imitating washed drawings,

* This term is applied to painting or printing in a single colour, varied only in depth of tints (as red, blue, bistre, &c.).

and giving an exact representation of designs executed in many tints, and therefore more difficult than others to be faithfully copied.

During the two centuries which followed, engraving on wood was suddenly, and almost entirely, abandoned in all countries. In the middle of the eighteenth century we only find one engraver in Italy endeavouring to restore to favour a process formerly employed with such happy results by the artists we have named. Antonio Maria Zanetti published at Venice, in 1749, a series of prints, executed *en camaïeu* by himself, after designs by Parmigiano ; but he had no imitators, and confined himself to this one publication. Even now that wood-engraving has by degrees regained a very important position, it hardly exists in Italy, which has hitherto been the first to adopt every new invention, and, until the middle of the sixteenth century, had taken the first place in every branch of art.

Engraving on Metal—Nielli.—A goldsmith of Florence, Maso Finiguerra, had just put the last touch to an engraving of a 'Pax,'* ordered by the brothers of the church of St. John, and wishing to see the effect of his work, filled the lines traced by his graver

* 'Pax,' is the name given to a plate of chased metal, enamelled or niello, still used in the solemn feasts of the Agnus Dei. It was called 'Pax' because, after it had been kissed by the officiating priest, the acolyte, in presenting it to each of the assisting ecclesiastics, pronounced the words "Pax tecum." (Littré, 'Dictionnaire de la Langue Française,' t. ii., p. 906).

with a liquid composed of oil and lamp-black. By chance, a pile of damp linen was placed upon the silver plate thus prepared, and the sunk lines filled with black liquid were reproduced upon the linen.

Such, we are assured, was the origin of engravings. Is this legend true or false? It is impossible to cite any trustworthy document either for or against it; but no one doubts that Maso Finiguerra is the author of the 'Coronation of the Virgin,' a niello, engraved in 1452. The original plate is in the Uffizi Gallery, at Florence, and the only known impression from it is carefully preserved in the Bibliothèque de Paris. Must we believe that no engraving appeared before this time? and are we to consider 1452 the date of the origin of engraving on metal? This opinion was accepted for a long time, but now scholars have brought to light prints which contradict it. If, however, we are to admit that an art is not really invented before it produces a choice work, we may, until further information, consider the 'Pax' of Maso Finiguerra the first specimen known of the art of engraving.

At Florence, as in other Italian cities, goldsmiths' work was very much in fashion at the beginning of the fifteenth century; and this, like other branches of art, was then practised by men of real merit. At this time goldsmiths adorned most of their works with sunken designs, and these designs were called "nielli." Their mode of testing their work was as follows. When they had engraved the required design upon

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A PAX.

From the Niello by Maso Finiguerra.

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the metal, they first took an impression in very fine clay ; upon this they sprinkled sulphur, and then, by filling in the engraved parts with lamp-black, they were able to obtain a just notion of their work. Until perfectly sure of the final result, they would not have dreamt of pouring in the indestructible enamel or coloured matter called "nigellum," which, when once in its place, prevented any further impression being taken.

When they discovered that damp paper firmly pressed upon the plate, impregnated with a certain ink, gave the same result, they abandoned the use of sulphur, and their trials on paper became engravings. They did not at once see all that their discovery involved. For a long time workers in gold confined themselves to the small number of impressions necessary to the progress of their work ; and it is to this indifference that we must attribute the extreme rarity of these early impressions, and the great value which amateurs attach to them. (The neuter noun "nigellum," is usually called "niello," and is applied indiscriminately to the plate itself and the impression taken from it.)

Fig. 1.—Niello.

The nielli are by no means all of equal merit, and were it not for their rarity many would be scarcely worthy of a place in choice collections. Indeed, although the Italian masters, and men of true genius, were the first to express grandeur of form and perfect beauty on metal, we must not ignore the fact that there were many second-rate artists working and prospering at the same time. Instead of always deriving their inspiration from the examples before them, they were sometimes imprudent enough to borrow their models from the neighbouring countries, thereby voluntarily depriving their works of the stamp of nationality, which generally distinguished Italian productions of the fifteenth century. We must not suppose that the use of niello was given up as soon as the means of taking impressions by other processes were discovered. The previous demand for nielli still continued, and goldsmiths were not inclined to put in jeopardy an art which brought them honour and profit; they thus still covered with engravings the plates which were to ornament furniture, armour, or caskets. It was only towards the beginning of the sixteenth century, when public taste took another direction, that they abandoned this kind of work.

We know the names of a certain number of niellists, but this is about all we do know. These artists did not appear worthy of special mention to the historians who wrote of the sixteenth century, and the few works they have signed reveal nothing of their

lives. We can put the names of Maso Finiguerra, Peregrini da Cesena, Antonio Pollajuolo, Matteo di Giovanni Dei, Francesco Raibolini, called Francia, and of Marc-Antonio Raimondi under the works attributed to them with almost absolute certainty, or great probability, but it would be difficult to give the smallest biographical details about many of them; say for instance of Matteo di Giovanni Dei, to whom tradition ascribes two plates, preserved in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence, the 'Crucifixion,' and the 'Conversion of St. Paul;' but as we cannot compare these anonymous works with any signed drawings of Matteo di Giovanni Dei, we ought scarcely to sanction this tradition. On the contrary, some official reports published by Gaye in his 'Carteggio d'Artisti' prove undeniably that the most illustrious of all these artists, Maso Finiguerra is really the author of the Florence 'Pax,' representing the 'Coronation of the Virgin,' and this is enough to prove that other nielli which denote singular knowledge and exquisite taste, may be attributed to the same hand.

Peregrini da Cesena engraved a considerable number of nielli on metal, which he sometimes signed in full and sometimes with a monogram only. He was evidently greedy of fame, for he is the only artist who signed the greater part of his productions.

The painter and engraver Antonio Pollajuolo, is thought to be the author of two other small nielli which are remarkable for the somewhat puerile exact-

ness of the drawing of the muscles and bones of the human body.

As for Francesco Francia and Marc-Antonio Raimondi, we know enough of their works to be able to admire the nielli attributed to them without fear of mistake. After being for a long time much underrated, Francia is now, by some enthusiastic admirers, considered a painter of the first order. To us both opinions appear equally exaggerated. The pictures, incontestably by this artist, exhibited in the Pinacoteca at Bologna, his native place, certainly show great artistic feeling and rare knowledge of drawing, but does this entitle their author to take rank among and share the renown of the greatest masters? Certainly not: and while on this subject, we must say that we consider the nielli attributed to him, of which we have seen the original plates at Bologna, are by no means so beautiful as the indiscriminate admirers of every work of his would have us believe. These plates represent 'Christ on the Cross' and the 'Resurrection.' The arrangement and style of the figures recall the designs engraved by Marc-Antonio Raimondi after Francia, and this is equivalent to saying that they have neither imaginative power, nor grandeur of style sufficient to warrant the fame they enjoy. Marc-Antonio Raimondi has nothing to gain by being considered an engraver in niello. The few prints attributed to him which we have seen in Paris, or in Count Durazzo's collection at Bologna, add no new lustre to

his glory; we will therefore merely remember his name, reserving our appreciation of him as an artist until we consider Italian engraving; for he devoted his talent almost exclusively to reproducing the sublime works of Raphael.

The number of anonymous artists who worked in niello is very considerable. It would perhaps be interesting to try and discover the authors of compositions which are often excellent and worthy of an illustrious name, but this is not the place for such an undertaking, and we think it will be more to the point to show how Italians may profit by the discovery of printed proofs, and to review briefly the history of engraving, properly so called.

Engravings, properly so called.—When Italian goldsmiths, unconsciously to themselves, discovered engraving, artists to whom the process of chasing was necessarily familiar, availed themselves of it, and created for themselves the name of engravers. This transition was made insensibly and unnoticed by all. As soon, however, as Italian art assumed a characteristic style, it divided itself into several schools, which must be separately studied. The Florentine artists aspired to another ideal than did those of the northern cities, who again differed essentially from the masters of Umbria, or the Roman States. Thus Florence, Venice, Milan, Rome, Modena, and Bologna, who took so great a part in the development of the new art, all

demand attention, for reasons often very different, as each one produced engravers who were clever in preserving the national originality, which characterises these schools. There were as many schools as cities. We will endeavour to point out their distinctive characteristics, and at the same time make them serve as divisions of our work.

Florence.—In engravings properly so called, as well as in nielli, Florence is in advance of the other Italian cities. This city was really predestined to lead. After producing in the middle ages the best works of the early Italian masters, Florence was also the cradle of engraving; it seemed indeed that these two arts, which so much assist each other, were destined to be born under the same sky.

The first engravings on metal executed in Italy are found in the 'Monte Santo di Dio' (1477), and in an edition of 'Dante' (1481). If Vasari is to be believed, a great painter supplied the designs and even assisted in the engraving. This artist was Sandro Botticelli, and for a fellow-labourer seems to have had Baccio Baldini, an artist whose life is little known, but to whom Bartsch attributes a number of engravings. Those of the 'Prophets' and the 'Sibyls' in the 'Monte Santo di Dio' and 'Dante,' betray an inexperienced hand, but they are valuable on account of their accurate drawing; they betoken a great appreciation of beauty, and though the artists to whom they are

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Fig. 2.—Sibyl Agrippa. SANDRO BOTTICELLI.

attributed, expressed their thoughts imperfectly, owing to their ignorance of all the resources of the new process, they are still full of interest and worthy of the highest respect. The two series of the 'Prophets' and the 'Sibyls' were so much sought after when they appeared, that the plates were worn out and required retouching in a very short time. They were copied by German artists about the beginning of the sixteenth century, and this shows that they were of sufficient merit to be attributed with every probability to Sandro Botticelli. The general style and the treatment of the heads are the same as in this great master's pictures. To give an example from the authentic works of the great Florentine, we will notice a 'Recumbent Venus,' formerly in the possession of the Marquis Campana, but now in the Emperor Napoleon's collection. The head of the goddess is exactly the same as that of the 'Sibyl Agrippa,' and, making due allowance for the difference between painting and engraving, it is clear that the artist has in both cases worked on a settled plan, not troubling himself much with his model until he has given the outline of the face and form he means to represent in a few firm and skilful strokes.

A contemporary of Maso Finiguerra, and like him a niellist and goldsmith, Antonio Pollajuolo, seems to have worked at the same time as the artists of whom we have spoken above. He was born at Florence in 1426, as testified by an inscription on his tomb. He studied successfully under Bartoluccio and Lorenzo

Ghiberti, but he left the studios of these artists to work in gold on his own account. If Vasari is to be believed (and he is the only historian who has transmitted authentic documents relating to this artist) Pollajuolo had a marvellous talent for working in metal; and although his productions were most exquisite and soon widely sought after, he was not content with being an excellent goldsmith, but wishing to study painting he asked his brother, Piero Pollajuolo, to teach him the secrets of this great art. Endowed with marvellous energy and of an invincible will, his renown as a painter was soon equal to that which he had gained as a goldsmith. However this may be, his pictures are rare enough. Those which we were able to see at Florence, Milan, and London, appeared to us as remarkable for the pedantry with which the artist has paraded his knowledge of anatomy, as for the really noble taste of the designs. This systematic exaggeration of human forms, combined with praiseworthy refinement of style, is certainly reproduced in three engravings attributed to him: 'Combat of Ten Naked Men,' 'Hercules and Antæus,' and the 'Combat of Two Centaurs.' It is true that only one of these is signed, but what does that matter if the others are proved to have come from the same studio? Besides Pollajuolo is easily recognisable in his works; he had certain peculiar notions about designs, and he would not, like most of his contemporaries, have left unrevealed the secrets of an art which he had fathomed.

If we believe certain recent documents, Fra Filippo Lippi was both the artist and engraver of an 'Annunciation' and a 'Crucifixion,' which form part of a series of fifteen pictures relating to the 'Life of the Virgin.' It is certainly not improbable that the two plates were executed after designs by Fra Filippo Lippi; but that they were by his own hand appears to us, at least, doubtful. In comparing them with some anonymous prints executed at the same period, 'The Preaching of St. Mark,' 'David slaying Goliath,' 'Solomon appearing before the Queen of Sheba,' and 'The Last Judgment,' for example, we recognise that the hand which somewhat inaccurately engraved these wonderful and skilful designs is that of the author of the prints in question. Again, if Filippo Lippi were really the author of these engravings he would have marked them with his own monogram, and he would not, particularly in the 'Life of the Virgin,' have omitted the head of Lucrezia Buti, which he had taken for his prototype of the mother of Christ, and which occurs so frequently amongst the faces of his women in his pictures and frescoes. Let us add, that if indeed their author was Fra Filippo Lippi, he must have produced them very early in his adventurous life, and even this idea is contradicted by weighty arguments; as Lippi's very first pictures show a feeling for beauty of which there is but little trace in these disputed prints; and though not presenting much skill in workmanship, these plates would show a firmness in design and a

decision in expression of which there is not even a foreshadowing.

Vasari, who has given a long chapter to engravers by profession, does not mention Robetta. He seems to have considered this artist a mere goldsmith. Whatever may be the cause of this forgetfulness—and it is of little consequence, the plates being more eloquent than the best authenticated descriptions—we must assert that the prints signed with this name merit special attention. Drawn with unvarying beauty and elegance, and engraved with a boldness and ease rare amongst the early Italians, they may sometimes be marred by timidity and inexperience, never by want of taste or incorrectness of design. Unlike most of the engravers of his time, Robetta was not content to draw fully-draped forms alone, he attempted nude figures also, in order to show how deeply he had studied anatomy. The men in his works, who are mostly young, seldom display much muscular development, except as in 'Hercules and Antæus,' when the subject demands it, they are agile and supple rather than vigorous, masses of curling hair shade their brows, and instead of the austerity usual in contemporary Florentine compositions, their faces wear mild and smiling expressions. The delicate and graceful forms of his women are perfectly chaste in their absolute nudity; they are full of elegance, and there is a strange charm in their pure unveiled bodies. Although belonging to the old school, Robetta ad-

vanced his art so much, that he may be considered the last of the early engravers.

It is a strange fact that we must now turn to France to find artists who retained the peculiarities of the Florentine school. Florentine taste, considerably modified no doubt, is certainly easily recognised in some works by our fellow-countrymen. Francis I. and Henry II., as is well known, attracted Leonardo da Vinci and Andrea del Sarto to their court; these two artists, quickly followed by Primaticcio and Rosso, were accompanied by a number of engravers, who, labouring alike at French and Italian works of art, introduced their native style and founded the famous school of Fontainebleau, which occupies so important a position in the history of art. If it had not been for engravings the memory of this famous school might never have been preserved. The works of Rosso have entirely disappeared, and, with the exception of the grand 'Galerie des Fêtes,' which has already required constant restoration, there is scarcely a trace of Primaticcio's sojourn in France. Still the influence of these artists was immense. Under their auspices art underwent a complete metamorphosis. After deriving their inspiration now from Flanders, now from Italy, the French in their turn inspired artists from all countries. The Italians, too, modified their style, and Rosso, who had just decorated the walls of the convent of the Annunziata at Florence with an admirable fresco, broke with the traditions of his school and

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changed his style as soon as he set foot on French soil. In fact he changed so completely that he soon became more French than the French themselves. Art, hitherto exclusively Christian, now borrowed subjects largely from mythology; and, from a powerful auxiliary of the Church, she now suddenly became pagan, and chose to represent the adventures of gods and goddesses and the exploits of fabulous heroes on the walls of Fontainebleau. This was certainly quite a new opening and a strange and significant change. If these mystical paintings had not coincided with the tastes of the masters of Fontainebleau would they have preferred such subjects? To ask the question is to answer it. Nothing is more natural than that the walls of a gay mansion, where the court lived in a perpetual round of gaiety should be covered with bacchanals, sirens, and fauns, rather than with biblical personages. Rosso was the first to be entrusted with the decoration of Fontainebleau. He thoroughly understood the necessities of his work, he identified himself with the idea he had to carry out, and for a time at least he was able to forget where he had learnt his art and to devote himself entirely to fulfilling the wishes of his employers.

When we consider French engraving, we will examine more thoroughly the extraordinary importance of this school of Fontainebleau; at present we content ourselves with noticing the part Florence took in this movement, and the ascendency which a master of her

school obtained over his contemporaries. But Florentine art, so homogeneous and full of life at the beginning, declined rapidly at the close of the sixteenth century. Historians notice some marks of talent without naming any prominent individual. Henceforth the first place belongs to neighbouring countries.

The cities of Northern Italy.—One of the artists who adopted the new style with the greatest success, seems to have been Andrea Mantegna. Born at Padua in 1431, he learned drawing under Francesco Squarcione, and when quite young devoted himself to painting. His genius procured him the protection of Luigi da Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, and he was chosen by Pope Innocent VIII. to decorate the chapel of the Belvidere. As a painter his fame became immense, and his works have been extremely admired ever since his time. His wish to see the compositions he proposed to execute—and did execute later in the palace of the Duke of Mantua—widely spread, was evidently one of his chief motives for adopting and patronising engraving. Unfortunately he could not finish his series of engravings of the 'Triumph of Cæsar;' the slowness of the process, the necessity of producing works of a different kind, compelled him to abandon it, but happily for the greater glory of art he still sometimes handled the graver, and brought out several plates worthy of the

admiration they always excite. It is true that his prints have not the truth, the correctness of detail, the exquisite finish of his paintings; but if we miss the minute exactness unattainable on metal, we have the bold and skilful strokes of a hand which is content with a sketch, and reserves its full power for the painting. But does this apparent negligence or rather freedom and ease interfere with the correctness of the outline or the force of the expression? Not in the least. We may even assert that the studied ruggedness and the systematic intention to avoid picturesque effects, have stamped this master's engravings —'The Entombment,' and the 'Descent to Hades,' for instance—with a gloomy grandeur of their own, admirably suited to the subjects. Mantegna appeals to the soul, not to the eye. Always in quest of beauty, but of beauty rather majestic than graceful, he has a great predilection for touching scenes and mournful episodes. His figures have ever a peculiar nobility and grandeur, whether he call upon us to mourn the dead Christ with St. John, or to look at a drunken youth reclining on a wine cask, supported by a faun. The Virgin, as he understands her, is neither mild nor resigned; how proud she is, on the contrary, of her divine Son adored by the eastern kings—how overwhelmed she is with sorrow at the entombment! But Mantegna has elsewhere expressed beauty of quite a different type. In a print attributed to him of 'St. Sebastian,' he has given a perfect notion of

elegance and youth. Agile and supple this figure might pass for a personification of adolescence.

Andrea Mantegna's prints ought, strictly speaking, to be considered the first engravings executed in Italy.

Fig. 3.—Virgin and Child. MANTEGNA.

Until then many goldsmiths, sometimes of exceptional talent, had, it is true, devoted themselves to engraving at Florence, Venice, Bologna, and other towns; but Mantegna was the first artist of note who

engraved plates to be printed from, which were destined to inspire and lead an entire school.

The school formed by Mantegna's works, and directed by the master himself for some years, definitely naturalised engraving in Northern Italy, but the artists who belonged to it are almost unknown. Careless of fame, they generally neglected to sign their works with a monogram or any mark of identification, and if by chance they did sign them, it was with initials only, so that recognition is still difficult.

The names of two artists, Zoan Andrea and Giovanni Antonio da Brescia are preserved to us; but if we are able to attribute some few prints to them, numbers still remain unappropriated.

The greater number of plates issued from Mantegna's school have no very striking qualities. Executed under the eye of the master, or at least in his style, they may show accurate knowledge and lofty aspirations, but none of them deviate sufficiently from the school-routine to have a distinct personality. They are works of docile pupils, who set small store by their own originality. There were, however, exceptions to this. Where it seemed less needed, Mantegna's pupils gave decided proofs of original power; we allude to the ornaments and arabesques, which they arranged with marvellous skill. They had admirable sculptures at hand in the churches and palaces of Northern Italy, accurate and varied traceries surrounding the porticos, decorating the tombs, or cover-

ing the friezes of the monuments. In these works, where imagination is free, and the human form, if employed, accommodates itself to the exigencies or caprices of the artists, without prejudice to art, Mantegna's pupils were able to give the reins to their fancy; and whilst remaining faithful to the principles of their school, they invented and distributed with their engravings a number of charming arabesques, such as but for them could only have been admired at Venice, Verona, or Padua.

Great as was Mantegna's authority with the engravers of Northern Italy, a school of art was formed at Venice independently of him. The master of the Venetians' choice and affection was the famous Giovanni Bellini, and if by chance they were attracted by Mantegna's frescoes belonging to the Eremitani of Padua, or in the Gonzaga's palace, they soon gave fresh evidence in their work of their exclusive and unchangeable admiration for G. Bellini, Titian, and Giorgione. Fortunate city to entertain such a band of men of genius! fortunate engravers to find such magnificent models in the works of contemporary artists! But are we to suppose that Venetian engravers always borrowed from others—that they never themselves invented their subjects? Certainly not. Although all their works are to some extent under a common influence, we cannot suppose, when we examine plates by Mocetto, Giulio and Domenico Campagnola, Benedetto Montagna, or Giacomo di Barbari,

that these artists were always content with the modest office of interpreters. They were mostly painters, and we can understand that they engraved their own works in preference to those of others. Even when they borrowed their subjects, they stamped them with an originality all their own.

Girolamo Mocetto, whose life is almost unknown, was at the same time a painter and an engraver. Many paintings signed in full by him do not give a very great idea of his talent as a painter. They are neither remarkable for originality nor beauty of style. But his engravings present him in a more favourable light. Though the hand is somewhat harsh and inexperienced, it has knowledge and a great feeling for drawing. Mocetto reproduced compositions in Mantegna's style with great skill, taking his chief inspiration from this master; he sometimes reflected also the grandeur of certain of Bellini's works. His prints were executed from very soft copper, which accounts for their rarity. The richest collections contain very few examples, but the *Cabinet des Estampes* in Paris possesses more than all other collections added together. Two plates, 'Judith and Holofernes,' and 'Bacchus beneath a Vine,' are sufficient to give a very high opinion of their artist's talent. These engravings, which are the finest of Mantegna's works, interest us especially, because they prove that, like the greater number of his contemporaries, he knew nothing of Albert Dürer's engravings, introduced into

Italy at this period, or if he did know them, he entirely ignored them.

Giulio Campagnola was a scholar; he read Greek and Latin, and knew Hebrew. His father, being a learned man, took care to give his son, when young, a good education. But whilst pursuing his study of languages his taste for art betrayed itself, and was so conspicuous that one of his contemporaries, Matteo Bosso, writing to Hector Théophanes, did not hesitate to say, "his works may compete with those of the great Venetian masters; he can render a painting of Mantegna's or Bellini's better than any other artists, and he is more successful in portrait-taking than were any of his predecessors." Making due allowance for the exaggeration of this—Matteo Bosso was a personal friend of the Campagnolas—we cannot but own that the young painter's first efforts must have been very brilliant. We know, positively, that he was among the men of genius attracted to the court of Ferrara by Hercules d'Este. We are ignorant in what capacity he mixed in this august assembly; if in that of a painter, we are unable to pronounce on his merits, for his pictures are now unknown, having been lost, destroyed, or attributed to some more famous masters, a common fate we must remark by the way of unsigned works, or of those which recall some illustrious style. In any case, none of Giulio Campagnola's pictures are preserved to us. We can judge of his style only by the engravings he has signed, and which time has spared.

They are not all distinguished by the same qualities: some are influenced by Albert Dürer, and remarkable for the peculiar nature of the work to which the artist has devoted himself, others reproduce compositions which may safely be attributed to Giorgione, Giovanni Bellini or Mantegna; they honestly preserve the style of these masters without giving the figures very exactly, the engraver having been content to sacrifice strict truth to the charm of colour. Giulio's landscapes taken from the countries he lived in, show greater study of nature than his figures. Giulio Campagnola was one of the first who conceived the idea of representing in engraving the colour of pictures. This he did by small dots nearer or further apart, which contrivance to a certain degree anticipated the invention of aquatint engraving.

Dominico's relation to Giulio Campagnola is not well established; but the two namesakes worked together as shown in a plate called 'The Concert,' and also in a design of 'St. John the Baptist.' Dominico's talent differs in many respects from Giulio's. In too great a hurry to work out his ideas on canvas or metal, he is not sufficiently careful about correctness of form, and he is indifferent to beauty; his enthusiasm carries him away; and although he attended Titian's studio, some of his works seem to imply that he belonged to the school of a less correct master—Jacopo Robusti, called 'Tintoretto.' He deliberately exaggerates outlines, movements, and expressions, under pretence of making

Fig. 4.—A youth. GIULIO CAMPAGNOLA.

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them more distinct. The story of his master's jealousy of him will lose all probability when his works are examined. Granted that his landscapes resemble Titian's more than any others, does that justify this famous jealousy? We think not. With Titian landscape certainly occupied a large space, but it is generally only the framework of a composition with figures, it is merely an accessory in most of his pictures, and contributes accidentally to his renown. Campagnola's first plans are not nearly so grand as Titian's, and if the skilful execution of his distances justifies this comparison, so glorious for him, there is nevertheless a uniformity and a want of force in his works which happily do not mar those of the illustrious Venetian.

Benedetto Montagna, born at Verona, like Mocetto, worked from 1505 to 1524. His engravings are less refined and his drawing is less correct than those of his fellow-countryman. He yielded to the influence of Albert Dürer more than any of the artists we have named. His first engravings, after his own paintings, are wanting in grace. But the 'Sacrifice of Abraham' is cleverly composed and skilfully executed; the drawing, too, is better than usual. Fine proofs of Montagna's engravings are rare; executed on soft metal they could only bear a limited amount of printing, and when once they are a little worn they lose nearly all their beauty.

No birthplace was ever more disputed than was that of Giacomo de' Barbari, known under the name of the

'Master of the Caduceus.' Some call him a German, others the contemporary and fellow-countryman of Lucas of Leyden. Some consider France his birth-place, others Ferrara. Recent authors confound him with a certain Jacob Walch, born at Nuremberg. The truth is that he was born at Venice about 1450, a date rendered probable by a picture signed by him and bearing date 1472. It is only fair to add that his style of engraving explains the difference of opinion about him. Remembering the beauty of the limbs of his figures, and a certain grandeur of style in his prints, as in 'Sebastian bound to a Tree,' we do not hesitate to recognise in him a descendant of the school of which Mantegna was the chief; but again, his plates seem to bear witness to a Teutonic origin. Such opposite qualities in this artist need not surprise when we know that Philip of Burgundy, natural son of Philip the Good, retained Giacomo de' Barbari in his service, and took him first to Nuremberg, and then to Holland, in which country the painter-engraver exercised great influence on art. Giacomo de' Barbari died in 1516. His scarce pictures, preserved in private or public galleries, testify still more than his engravings to his Italian origin. Of little imaginative power, he executed a single figure better than a composition; but even his figures are out of proportion: they are thin, with heads unduly large or absurdly small. His chief merit consists in the grace of his figures, and the ingenious rendering of the limbs which,

in spite of gross incorrectness of drawing, show a delicacy of touch and power of colouring, which lead us to suppose him to have belonged to the school of Giovanni Bellini and Giorgione.

Titian and his pupils were not fortunate in their engravers. With the exception of the author of the woodcuts mentioned above, not a single contemporary artist dedicated his talent to reproduce pictures ; and the small number of plates engraved at that time are the work of men without experience, incapable of copying the models before them. We will not recall the names of these unskilful interpreters, they are unworthy of being rescued from oblivion. At Venice, as in nearly all the other cities of northern Italy, the art had attained its zenith during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but the decadence quickly followed this glorious period. We have made the same remark about the Florentine school, and we shall have to repeat it. Engravers followed the general progress of art in Italy, and after having enthusiastically embraced the new invention, and after having produced works in which the feeling for colour and form is expressed with peculiar talent, they appear to have suddenly sunk into inactivity. The distance which separates the masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries from their next successors is immense, and the style which belongs to works of the early school is gone beyond recall. In the seventeenth century a Flemish artist, Valentin Lefèvre, passed the greater

part of his life at Venice, and engraved with considerable minuteness the best works of Titian and Paul Veronese. But being mere sketches, his engravings only give the compositions of these masters, missing the powerful effect and splendid colouring of the originals.

The Venetian school claims another artist of high merit, though only a landscape painter; but he did not flourish until the eighteenth century. We allude to Canaletto, who by the aid of his magic needle transferred to copper the charm of his pictures. In his numerous views of Venice, full of vivid lights and soft shadows, his figures cradled in gondolas or walking in the Piazza of St. Mark, or gravely seated under the Doge's palace, are grouped in a talented manner and cleverly hit off. A thousand indefinable things—the unrivalled temperature of Venice, the transparency of the atmosphere, the purity of the air, &c., are rendered with surprising felicity. Canaletto's pictures on the walls of our museums seem to light up the works around and to transport us to this happy land of brightness and sunshine, of glowing horizons and marble palaces. The same qualities in a less degree—the graver being less suited than the brush to give the magic of chiaroscuro—are also found in the etchings by this master. Canaletto stands alone in the modern Venetian school; and although one artist, named Guardi, tried to imitate his paintings, not a single engraver took his inspiration from his etchings.

Whilst Canaletto was working at the best known and most picturesque parts of Venice, a painter who enjoys a somewhat exaggerated reputation was engraving his own and his father's works, and giving proof of considerable talent. Domenico Tiepolo certainly knew how to obtain charming results by the etching needle; and although his paintings are inharmonious, the predominating colour being yellow, his etchings are delightful on account of their life and brightness. One may look in vain for a correct form or an exact outline, his figures are terribly ill-drawn; but the entire want of accuracy ought not to make us withhold our admiration from these seductive and delightful plates. Justly estimated, Tiepolo's prints are useful examples; amongst other things, they show what may be done in engraving when the light is well distributed, and many an artist might learn the laws of chiaroscuro by studying them.

Marco Pitteri engraved the 'Seven Sacraments' after Pietro Longhi. Avoiding cross-hatching altogether, he employed parallel strokes only, varying them in strength according to the amount of light and shade required. Although not very agreeable to the eye, this kind of engraving looks well enough at a little distance. The series of the 'Seven Sacraments,' which are this artist's best works, throw a curious light on Venetian manners in the eighteenth century; but it is in his subjects taken from domestic life that Pitteri best repays study. Indeed, in his engravings

of nearly life-sized heads of Jesus Christ, the Virgin, the evangelists, the apostles, or in his portraits after J. B. Piazzetta, we see the inadequacy of his style to copy living models. His plates of this sort are positively painful to look at. But we regain our natural interest in every trustworthy work which gives the customs of a country when we look at four plates after Pietro Longhi:—'A Nobleman setting out for the Chase; his Retainers making their preparations, cleaning their Arms;' and again, 'The Nobleman at Table jovially finishing the Day with his Companions.' Longhi's pictures engraved by Pitteri gained for their author the too flattering title of the Chardin of Italy. Whatever merit they may have, they are not worthy of such a comparison, and all the engraver's pains in rendering them could not remedy the poverty of the design or supply qualities which were wanting.

We could easily name other engravers of the eighteenth century who worked at Venice, and placed their talent at the disposal of the painters who flourished at this period. Amongst them we should have to notice Giacomo Leonardis and Pietro Monaco; but the part these artists took in the general progress of art was so small that they merit no more than mention. Before leaving the north of Italy, we must glance at the engravers of Milan, Parma, and Bologna, who are worthy of serious attention as much on account of their own merits as for the tendencies of their schools.

Milan.—At Milan, one great painter inspired a whole school, and his genius influenced an entire generation of artists. Leonardo da Vinci, whose sublime works are not very numerous, was expert in every branch of art. As a painter he executed the famous and well-known 'Last Supper' on the wall of Santa Maria delle Grazie; as a sculptor, he modelled the equestrian statue of Francesco Sforza, destroyed by the French in 1499, when Louis XII. entered Milan; as an architect and engineer he superintended the works of the Arno Canal; he was a musician also, and Vasari relates that L. da Vinci appeared before Francesco Sforza for the first time, at a fête given by the Duke, holding a lyre made by himself, and the company were so delighted with the melodious sounds he produced, that although many musicians were present all the applause was given to him. It is not improbable that he also handled graving and carving tools; documents preserved at Paris, Milan and in England, bear witness to the versatility of his genius, and justify this supposition. In the dedication of his book, 'De Proportione Divina,' Luca Paccioli positively asserts that Leonardo da Vinci is the author of the woodcuts which adorn this work: "*Nec vero multo post, spe animos alente, libellum cui de Divina Proportione titulus est, Ludovico Sphorciæ, duci Mediolanensi, nuncupavi. Tanto ardore ut schemata quoque sua Vincii nostri Leonardi manibus scalpta?*" The text is so explicit as almost to preclude discussion, but after examining the

volume we find it difficult to believe that L. da Vinci did more than supply the designs. How can we suppose that one of the greatest artists ever born would have spent his precious time carefully cutting out letters, cubes, or triangles in wood, when any engraver could have done it equally well? Amongst the numerous woodcuts illustrating this book, the first alone is of real artistic value. It is a single form in unshaded profile. The precision of the drawing, and the sweet, rather than powerful expression of the face, betray the hand of a Milanese, and the name of Leonardo da Vinci might be written under this figure and never, as we think, be contested. Several other prints are attributed to him, and one, we believe, with justice. Unless these peculiar ornaments, which appear to be composed of knotted cords, may belong, notwithstanding the inscription in the centre "Academia Leonardi Vinci," both as regards composition and engraving to some other artist; indeed, we are aware that some woodcuts signed with Albert Dürer's monogram, reproduce them exactly. It is not the same with 'Three Horses' Heads;' we know not to whom to attribute these unless to Leonardo da Vinci. We first saw this plate among a number of engravings of the early Italian school, and it reminded us so much of designs by Leonardo, which we had seen at Milan and Florence, that we at once pronounced this master to be the author. So great was our interest that we were anxious to know if it had been noticed by other historians, and we found

that our idea was at least near the truth, as Passavant attributes this engraving to Verrocchio, L. da Vinci's master, and Ottley is disposed to consider it the work of this great artist himself. Since we noticed this print we have studied the three manuscript volumes by Leonardo da Vinci, preserved in the splendid collection at Windsor. Great was our delight when we found the engraving in question pasted into one of the books and quoted in support of an opinion written by Leonardo's own hand. This, although not conclusive evidence—Leonardo might have taken one of his master's works as an example—certainly merits serious attention. We do not like to speak positively about the other plates attributed to this master. We have examined those in the British Museum, and whilst acknowledging that we are reminded of the style of the illustrious Milanese in 'A Woman in Bust and Profile;' 'A Woman crowned with Ivy,' and 'The Head of an Old Man,'—the bust attributed by Bartsch to Mantegna,—we reserve our judgment until further examination, merely suggesting that although certainly inspired by the great master they may have been executed in metal by one of his intelligent pupils.

If we have lingered long over the engravings attributed to this great master, it is because we shall not again have so illustrious a subject to discuss in these pages. The works of the Milanese school are not very numerous, so we can afford to give special attention to those of exceptional merit. As they are nearly all

anonymous, it is sometimes difficult to know how to treat them. Three early plates, engraved after Leonardo's 'Last Supper,' reproduce this great composition in a modified form, they are so inferior to the original that we cannot say much for them. 'The slightly bent Head of a young Girl;' 'A Lover caressing his Mistress,' and 'A Young Girl courted by a Man dressed as a Fool,' remind us slightly of the school of Leonardo da Vinci, but they are unsigned, and cannot be attributed to anyone with certainty. The drawing is that of a pupil, rather than of a master.

We are less doubtful about three plates attributed to Cesare da Sesto. Although there is no proof that this artist himself transferred his designs to metal, we think we recognise his hand in the 'Beheading of John the Baptist.' The executioner in the costume of the sixth century, and wearing a plumed cap, is sheathing his sword, and Salome, carrying the Baptist's head on a dish, is following the retreating figure of Herodias. This well-conceived composition reminds us of a hasty sketch, incontestably by L. da Vinci, contained in a volume of his designs lately added to the collection in the Louvre. The two other engravings attributed to Cesare da Sesto are of quite a different kind, they represent 'A Hind reclining on an Isle,' and 'A Browsing Stag.' It is possible that they were engraved by the author of 'John the Baptist,' but he certainly did not draw them.

Before leaving the artists of the early Milanese

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school, we must say a word on a precious volume containing wood-cuts. They are exquisitely drawn and belong entirely to the school guided by Leonardo da Vinci. This book—an account of St. Veronica—was printed at Milan in 1518. Amongst the ten engravings it contains, three of them, remarkable for the softness of the drawing and the tenderness of the expression, were certainly designed by Luini. They form the frontispieces of Books III. V. and VI. and are: 'Christ and St. Veronica reading,' 'An Angel guiding St. Veronica's Hand, who is writing,' and 'St. Veronica reading from a Book held by an Angel before whom she is kneeling.'

Parma.—We know that it would have seemed more reasonable to speak of the school of Parma after we had reviewed the works executed at Rome; but we prefer to finish our history of engraving in Italy, with the town where the art attained its highest perfection. The influence of the Roman school upon that of Parma, great as it was, was not complete. Mazzuoli, called Parmigiano, followed Raphael it is true, but only in drawing; the charm, the beautiful colouring of his engravings, are far more suggestive of his countryman, the unrivalled Correggio, than of any other master. Antonio Allegri of Parma stands alone in glory; he towers far above the rest of his school, he overawes his pupils, he makes engravers tremble. Before the indefinite charm of his works,

which with good reason they consider inimitable, they are absolutely paralysed. So much grandeur overpowers them, and they only recover calmness enough to continue their occupation when they turn to the paintings of Mazzuoli, who, though far less powerful than Allegri, is very clever, and justly considered to be the one who first inspired the school of engraving at Parma.

Francesco Parmigiano was not only the best engraver of his school, he was also the first, judging from the results he obtained, to develop fully the resources of the etching needle. Albert Dürer, and many of his predecessors, had used this process without improving on it at all. In tracing the design upon the varnish the needle should never imitate the work of the graver; it has its own mission to fulfil, which is to transmit numerous proofs of the same design, which, conceived and promptly executed by the painter, does not require the dangerous interposition of an interpreter. Etching is, above all other, the engraving best suited to a painter, and anyone with a knowledge of drawing will easily learn it. Francesco Mazzuoli found hitherto unknown resources in this process. Although the engravings signed by him betray indifference to purity and want of finish, they contain all that makes a painter; they are full of grace and fascination, and of a kind of beauty which is inferior neither to the bold and vigorous, nor to the free and easy style. They also show a knowledge of

chiaroscuro, which had escaped the predecessors of Parmigiano, and in this their connection with the school which gave birth to Correggio is clearly seen.

Religious subjects did not suit Parmigiano's taste so well as those taken from mythology. His 'Christ' is too suggestive of Adonis; under his needle the 'Virgin' is vain and worldly. Out of place in many instances, this affectation is not so painful in heathen figures such as 'Polyhymnia,' or 'Venus drying herself in leaving the Bath,' where the artist's fancy is freer. From their first appearance, the etchings by Parmigiano were as successful as his paintings. They were greedily sought after, and several of his pupils, anxious to share their master's popularity, endeavoured to appropriate the process he had raised to such honour. One of them, A. Meldolla, succeeded so well, that his works were sometimes mistaken for Mazzuoli's. Modern learning has rectified this confusion. Working side by side with Parmigiano, under his daily influence, and generally copying his works, Meldolla at last became so identified with his master in his manner of looking at and rendering nature, that the mistakes to which his engravings have given rise are quite excusable. This obedience to his master's principles was so complete, that when Meldolla engraved Raphael's works, he made them so suggestive o Mazzuoli's style, that had not the author of the originals been well known, they might have been attributed to Parmigiano. Yet these two artists

(Meldolla and Mazzuoli) engraved by different processes. Whilst Mazzuoli always employed aquafortis only, Andrea Meldolla sometimes called the graver to his aid, and did not hesitate to employ the dry-point, that is to say, he drew with a needle on the bare metal, so as to obtain results which the acid eating into the plate could not reproduce, and which the graver is incapable of rendering. He also made attempts at chiaroscuro engraving on copper. By means of two or three successive printings, he tried to produce what engravers "*en camaïeu*" obtained so well—the appearance of a washed drawing; and this attempt at Parma is curious, as it was in that town that engravers "*en camaïeu*" seem to have combined together to render Francesco Mazzuoli's works. A composition signed with Meldolla's name and dated 1540, 'The carrying away of Helen,' admitted him to the rank of an engraver; but until the end of the eighteenth century his prints were nevertheless attributed to Andrea Schiavone, a Venetian painter, a pupil of Titian and Giorgione, or they were mixed up with the anonymous works of the school of Parma.

Francesco Mazzuoli had no successors: he had guided a large school; he had enjoyed an immense renown during his life, but his influence died with him, and when her chief was gone, Parma no longer possessed a school of engraving.

Bologna.—Whoever has been to Bologna can testify

to the homogeneity of the school which arose there. No museum gives a better notion of the artists of a country than the Pinacoteca of Bologna, where the national masters are represented by their best works, and celebrated pictures are chronologically arranged from the time of the origin of the art to the middle of the sixteenth century. It would be impossible to form a better idea elsewhere of Bolognese artists. The archives and official papers have been carefully searched, and the great works examined by the historians of local art, but all this avails engraving very little, and it is necessary to see the works themselves to judge of the artists born at Bologna or influenced by her school.

The earliest engraver, Francesco Raibolini, called *il Francia*, engraved several nielli referred to above. He had two relations, both painters, Giulio and Giacomo Francia, who engraved with little refinement, and in whose works the style of this school is easily seen. The type of their figures is almost Venetian, but the chiaroscuro is wanting, and the engraving itself betrays inexperience. These two artists, perhaps, deserve severe criticism, but side by side with them arose an engraver whose works placed him in front among the masters of his art. Marc-Antonio Raimondi was born at Bologna, he worked under Francesco Francia, learnt the rudiments of his art from him, and at first copied his designs. It was later, when through copying Albert Dürer's prints, he

had acquired perfect knowledge of drawing and great skill in handling the graver, that he thought of devoting himself entirely to the service of Raphael. When we consider the Roman school it will be time enough to reflect on the merits of this most celebrated of the engravers of Bologna, and we shall then show the influence which Marc-Antonio exercised over the school of which he was the founder and the chief. The truth is, that the school of Bologna did not assume real importance until the end of the sixteenth century. Just before the time of the Carracci, artists in Bologna began to handle the graver, and their style was subsequently developed by the Carracci. Bartolomeo Passarotti, Camillo Procaccini and Domenico Tibaldi, belonged to a community where artists and artisans mixed freely together, but they soon left it, and established a rival society headed by Passarotti. But these artists, whose style was rough and their drawing somewhat coarse, failed to attract artists to their school. They needed an authority which their works did not give them. It was the Carracci who established, if they did not actually found, the school of Bologna. The first who began this work was Luigi Carracci. He was a laborious worker of some creative power; and these qualities, added to a great desire for fame, were excellent in a reformer. Being extremely energetic, the irksomeness of the work only increased his perseverance. His cousins, Agostino and Annibale, who were more talented than himself, seconded

his efforts, and whilst he devoted himself chiefly to the study of drawing, they endeavoured to bring artists back to true study of nature and a real knowledge of the works of the great masters. Raphael, Correggio, and Titian were their favourite models, and after travelling about to obtain a thorough acquaintance with the works of the masters of their choice, they returned to Bologna and opened the celebrated academies, 'degli Desiderosi' and 'degl' Incaminati.' In the first were classed rising artists, pupils of the Carracci, in the second there were none but artists whose genius was already developed, or amateurs who recognised the founders of the school as the true reformers of art. The Carracci revived engraving as well as painting. Luigi was again the first to give expression to his ideas on copper, but he had no greater facility for this art than for painting. He only accomplished six or seven plates, none of which show as much cleverness as those by his cousins.

Notwithstanding the prodigious number of his paintings, Annibale Carracci found time to engrave a few plates. Two of them in particular assure him a high position among Italian engravers: 'The Dead Christ supported by the Holy Women'* (1597), known under the name of the 'Christ of Caprarola,' because it was executed in that town, is engraved

* The original plate is still in the Academy of Fine Arts at Bologna.

entirely with the graving tool with a fineness of touch and justice of expression rarely attained by this artist; and 'A Drunken Silenus drinking from a Leathern Bottle, held to him by a Satyr,' shows the same qualities. In this print, Annibale Carracci has not striven for effect, he has been content to illustrate the science of design, and he has succeeded perfectly. In another plate, 'The Holy Family' (Anni. Car. in fe, 1590), he has concerned himself chiefly with colour. But here he overrated his power, the transition from black to white are too abrupt and hard; the faces are not as carefully drawn as usual, and though the head of the Virgin is accurately designed, the plate is of no great merit.

The two Carracci of whom we have been speaking only gave a small portion of their time to engraving. It was different with Agostino Carracci. We know of a good many paintings by him, but his works in engraving are still more numerous; they consist of head and tail-pieces for books, sacred images, historical pictures and portraits. His style too often reminds us of that of Italianised artists, such as Cornelius Cort and Philip Thomasin. Agostino Carracci, who drew better than any of them, and understood more thoroughly the art of engraving, made the mistake of producing too much. When he reproduced works by Paul Veronese or Tintoretto, he did not succeed in rendering their grandeur and beauty, and without the charm of colour, their designs are made to appear inadequate and

sometimes coarse. It is the same with an engraving of 'Ecce Homo' after Correggio, which is a harsh rendering of that great master's work. But in the most famous of his works, in all respects worthy of the favour it enjoys, the superb portrait of Titian, Agostino Carracci has surpassed himself. The noble master is represented in bust, wearing a cap and the fur-lined cloak he loved so well. We can imagine that in working at this portrait of Titian by himself, the engraver was inspired by the genius of the master whose features he was copying, for never before had he showed so much talent or so thorough a comprehension of the human countenance.

The influence of the school directed by the Carracci was great, and the artists belonging to it remained faithful to the principles there instilled. Amongst them there were many whose works until quite recently were attributed to their masters. This led to many names remaining unknown. Two artists have escaped oblivion, Francesco Brizzio, author of the 'Repose in Egypt,' after Correggio, engraved with a very heavy graver, and Giovanni Valesio, a painter, poet, master of the lute, of dancing, and of fencing, who, living at a distance from his master, Agostino Carracci, nevertheless almost always reproduced his works. Giovanni Lanfranco belongs to the same school, and his ability as a painter—his talent was too facile and his taste sometimes doubtful—gives him a distinguished place beside the Carracci whose pupil he was. We are

indebted to him for some engravings after the 'Loggie' of Raphael, dedicated to Annibale Carracci. They are remarkable for an ease and skill rare amongst the engravers of these immortal works.

When the influence of the school of the Carracci began to decline, new artists arose who revived the principles of their predecessors and restored the art of Bologna to its former splendour. Guido Reni, who left many admired paintings, also etched a number of plates. The ordinary type of his painted figures is feeble and insignificant, and he engraved them with too much freedom. Good workmanship is not all that is required; we could have wished for more grandeur in his 'Holy Families,' more majesty in the heads of Christ and of the Virgin. These etchings are well and artistically designed, but it is a pity that the 'Virgin adoring the Infant Christ' is too pretty and not sufficiently divine; her smile is often studied and unreal, and the general expression of her face insipid and affected. Still the execution is graceful and contains effects which none of this master's imitators have been able to render. Simone Cantarini, called the Pesarese, whose style most resembled that of Guido Reni, was not so successful with drapery, but in the pose of the head he has quite equalled his master. Andrea Sirani, Lorenzo Lolli, and some other painters preserved Guido Reni's manner, and followed him accurately in their etchings, but as these are mere

copies they do not deserve a place in the history of art.

It is different with Domenico Zampieri, an artist of high rank, who though born at Bologna, was thoroughly imbued with the exalted principles of the Roman school, and gained for himself an exceptionally high place among artists. Poussin considered him one of the greatest masters after Raphael, and Guido assigned him similar rank. He did not engrave, at least no plate is attributed to him with certainty. We may well be surprised that his style and knowledge inspired so few of his contemporaries, for we cannot consider the two we are about to mention his engravers. Giacomo Margottini executed one plate, the six 'Christian Virtues,' after this master, and Piero del Pò sometimes followed his style, though generally preferring the works of Nicolas Poussin. If contemporary artists cared little to reproduce Domenichino's works, those of the next generation rescued them from undeserved oblivion, and largely multiplied and distributed them. Their plates have often served as models to artists; and although Domenichino's influence was not at first sufficiently great, it lasted long, and his works are now, we are glad to say, estimated at their true value.

Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, better known as Guercino, may be considered the last celebrated artist of the Bolognese school, but he attached himself to no master in particular. He worked under the super-

vision of the Carracci, it is true, but he departed so widely from their style, that, fairly speaking, he cannot be considered their pupil. He holds a high place in their school, we think too high. We do not approve of his sudden changes from shadow to light. He had little true love of art, though his facility of production was immense, and his etchings exact representations of his numerous drawings, share their faults. In them clever and rapid execution take the place of correctness of drawing and nobility of expression.

Rome.—At Rome there were not so many skilful engravers as in other Italian cities. Like painting, engraving developed there slowly, and the founder of the Roman school, Marc-Antonio Raimondi was a native of Bologna. We have already spoken of him, but at that time he was still seeking his vocation, hovering between the school of his master Francia and that of the Venetian artists, and even influenced by Albert Dürer, whose engravings had just penetrated into Italy. But his style was permanently formed as soon as he arrived in the Eternal City, to which he was attracted by the fame of Raphael. Guided by this master, he engraved 'Lucretia stabbing Herself' with such success, that Raphael at once decided to retain so clever an engraver near him; and it would appear that he gave him the exclusive right to reproduce his works.

Fig. 5.—Lucretia stabbing Herself. MARC-ANTONIO RAIMONDI.

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Raimondi's engravings now succeeded each other in quick succession. The 'Massacre of the Innocents,' 'Adam and Eve,' 'The Judgment of Paris,' and 'Poetry,' to mention only extraordinary works, are splendid instances of the intelligence with which the engraver rendered on metal the drawings of the painter. Marc-Antonio reproduced drawings only, and never attempted to copy direct from the paintings of Raphael—a fact worthy of notice, as did one not know the cause, the engravings, deprived of their picturesque effects, might be accused of not giving the tone of the original paintings. For those who know Raphael's works this observation will appear of little value. It is easy to perceive that 'Poetry,' engraved by Raimondi, is no more an exact image of the fresco in the Vatican than is his 'St. Cecilia' of the painting in the Bologna Museum. Remembering that engraving in Marc-Antonio's hands was not suited to rendering his paintings, Raphael preferred to give him his preparatory studies on paper, and in this he showed his admirable taste and clear judgment.

Marc-Antonio devoted the greater part of his existence to multiplying Raphael's works. But he was not content with this. We have already said, that before founding the Roman school of engraving, he hesitated a long time, and showed great perseverance in seeking a path for himself. Arrived at Rome, the great master whom he joined did not discourage his looking round on the works then sharing public atten-

tion with his own; and we could mention engravings executed in Rome by Marc-Antonio Raimondi after other masters than Raphael. But he is so imbued with the exalted principles of the master of his choice, that he cannot altogether ignore them. In 'The Climbers,' for example, engraved after the celebrated cartoon of Pisa by Michael Angelo, or in the 'Martyrdom of St. Lawrence,' by Baccio Bandinelli, we find an amount of precision, a reserved power probably rather exceeding that of the original drawings. Nor is it impossible that Marc-Antonio engraved some compositions in which the figures, at least, were original. But the plates attributed to his pencil, as well as to his graver, are inferior in precision and knowledge to the others. Must we not conclude that this artist, so clever in interpreting the works of others, requires a powerful hand to guide and a strong mind to advise him. The truth is, that unlike most artists, Marc-Antonio Raimondi obtained his great reputation because he was able to renounce his own personality, because he reproduced contemporary works faithfully, with respect, almost with veneration, for the painters at whose service he placed his knowledge and his skill.

This rare power, added to consummate knowledge of drawing and engraving, bore ample fruit. Having obediently submitted himself to Raphael, Marc-Antonio became a master in his turn. Pupils hurried from all countries eager to take lessons from him and

profit by his counsels; and, thanks to his influence, Rome at length acquired a school of engraving. Those who approached most nearly to the master's style were Agostino Veneziano and Marco of Ravenna. Under Marc-Antonio's direct influence, often working with his eye upon them, they imitated his style so exactly that their works were sometimes taken for his—an error which sufficiently proves their merits.

Like Marc-Antonio, Agostino Veneziano was a long time finding his vocation. In order to acquire ease in handling the graver, he copied some engravings by Giulio Campagnola, rendered compositions by A. Dürer, and on joining the Roman school, not having as yet yielded to the all-powerful fascination of Raphael, he rendered several compositions by Bandinelli with all their exaggeration and bombast. He did not place himself under Raphael's influence until towards the end of that master's life, about 1516. His manner at once acquired a power and nobility of which there is no hint in his early works, and the prints he engraved from this date are undoubtedly his best.

Marco Dente, or Marco of Ravenna (he is known under the latter name in France) was more ready to assimilate himself to his master's style. He rendered several of Marc-Antonio's engravings, and although his copies have not the same precision of drawing or firmness of touch, they give a very good notion of the originals. If we admit, with some authors, that the

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second plate, known as the 'Massacre of the Innocents,' is the work of Marco of Ravenna, we must add that the pupil has in this one case approached his master very nearly. This engraving leaves us very doubtful as to its author. The firmness of touch, or, we should rather say, the general beauty, is very striking, and places its author, whoever he may be, beside Raimondi. If it be by Marco of Ravenna, it is his only work of great merit, and but for it, the modest office of copyist, to which he almost exclusively devoted himself, would scarcely have sufficed to give him a prominent place in the history of art. Several artists, though they proceeded from his school, departed in some points from Raimondi's rules. Amongst them was Jacopo Caraglio, an artist of Verona, mentioned by Aretino in the 'Cortigiana;' according to him, Caraglio is the cleverest engraver after Marc-Antonio. It is only just to add that he owes this very favourable mention to the 'Loves of the Gods' engraved after Pierino del Vaga and Rosso; and it was probably the subject, rather than the execution, which interested and fascinated the engraver's apologist. It is difficult to define Caraglio's manner. It is manifold. Now he engraves with a free hand, as in the 'Loves of the Gods;' now, as in an extensive series of 'Heathen Deities in Niches,' his style is precise and correct, and reminds one by its neatness of Marc-Antonio's manner; at other times his drawing is coarse and

offensive. Caraglio seldom expresses grace, he excels more in force, as seen in his engraving of the 'Virgin and St. Anne between St. Sebastian and St. Roch,' which he composed himself, and which is really valuable for its rarity rather than for the exalted style of the Virgin's beauty.

Giulio Bonasone departs still further from Marc-Antonio's school than even Caraglio. His pleasing graver often conceals gross negligence. His numerous works comprise engravings of every sort. Executed from 1531 to 1574, they vary in value according to the rank of the artists after whom they were composed. Bonasone reproduced some drawings by Raphael and Michael Angelo, and, though falling far short of the originals, his engravings are not without charm; generally, however, he succeeded better with less exalted masters, who were more within his reach. Parmigiano supplied him with a great number of subjects to engrave, and he has reproduced on copper several compositions of his own. On the whole, remembering the originals of Bonasone's prints, we think we cannot call them more than ingenious. They have none of the best qualities; arranged with ease, perhaps with too much ease, they err in the drawing which wants power, and they err in the execution which is too hasty. The engraver has sacrificed quality to quantity, working much without caring to work well. Cesare Reverdino, a fellow-countryman and contemporary of Bonasone, engraved,

sometimes with the needle and sometimes with the graver, several small compositions which, in their size at least, remind us of the works of inferior German artists, or of the engravers of the school of Lyons. He was the first Italian artist who succeeded in rendering complicated subjects in such a limited space without sacrificing the expression or losing the picturesque effect. These engravings were executed from 1531 to 1554. The 'Master of the Die' was one of the cleverest of the artists, who were strongly influenced by Marc-Antonio, and endeavoured to copy his style without taking direct lessons from him. He often copied Raphael, and when not following him he did not leave the Roman school, but sought his models in the works of Giulio Romano and Balthazar Peruzzi. The 'History of Psyche' was entirely engraved by the 'Master of the Die.' Several of these important plates have been considered Marc-Antonio's compositions, but the engraving is more clumsy than his and the design less scholarly. In spite of this the care with which the artist has preserved the character of the drawings attributed to some Fleming copying Raphael's works, gives the 'Master of the Die' a high position in the Roman school.

A native of Parma, Æneas Vico, came to Rome as soon as he knew enough to profit by regular instruction. He at once yielded to the influence of Marc-Antonio. His first occupation on arriving in Rome was to reproduce the engravings by that master in

order to gain facility in the use of the graver. Compelled later to comply with the requirements of the editor Tomaso Barlacchi,—who shared with Andrea Salamanca the trade in engravings at Rome,—he copied simultaneously the compositions of Mazzuoli, of Perino del Vaga, and of Vasari. Towards 1545 he left Rome and went to Florence, where, under the special protection of Cosmo II. of Medici, he occupied himself entirely with the reproduction of the works of Baccio Bandinelli. His talent had now attained its fullest development, and the 'Leda,' executed after Michael Angelo, must be considered one of his best engravings. The execution in this plate recalls to us the dignity of Marc-Antonio's works, but at the same time Michael Angelo's drawing, full of his genius and energy, is faithfully rendered. Æneas Vico remained only five years at Florence. In 1550 we find him at Venice. There his first engraving was the 'Portrait of Charles V.,' which was most successful. It was presented to the emperor with ceremony, several descriptions of it were published, and many artists copied it. At Rome Æneas Vico was able to appreciate the monuments of antiquity. Having been instrumental in the discoveries of paintings and bas-reliefs made in the sixteenth century, he engraved some of these venerable relics of bygone civilisations. At Venice he turned towards this kind of work from choice. He published several collections of antique medals, and designed ornaments

in the manner of the ancients. In this he may be said not only to have followed but to have inaugurated a new style, and one which we own corresponded with the requirements of the age; erudition already occupied a large place in Italian art, now, alas! deprived of its primitive charm.

An entire family of engravers, natives of Mantua, adopted Marc-Antonio's style on arriving in Rome, and they endeavoured to modify it to suit their own inclinations, but the inevitable result of their study of his works was that they became disciples of the great Roman school. This family, the head of which was Giovanni Battista Scultori, passed the greater part of their existence at Rome. After working as a painter in the 'Palazzo del T.' at Mantua, under Giulio Romano, Giovanni Battista practised engraving. He has left about twenty plates, almost all after Giulio Romano, which fairly render that master's manner. They are carefully executed, and 'The Naval Combat,' Scultori's chief work, is distinguished by remarkable knowledge of drawing, and great command of the burin. But Giovanni Battista's two children, Diana and Adamo, gained more renown than their father. It is believed that they devoted themselves entirely to engraving. As was natural, Diana at first took lessons from her father, and she was also guided at first by the influence of Giulio Romano, but when she went to Rome and her taste became formed, her style completely changed. As she arrived long after

the death of Raphael, she could not have the benefit of direct instruction from this great master, and she had nothing to guide her but the works of his inferior pupils, Raphaellino da Reggio and the Zuccari. Yet in her engravings she contrived to recall the style of the great school which she knew only through the works of Giulio Romano, and she did this with truly marvellous skill in her later works after this master, viz., 'The Nuptials of Psyche,' 'The Banquet of the Gods,' and the 'Bath of Mars and Venus.' These three engravings, which, with a fidelity of execution rare in a woman, most faithfully reproduce the frescoes preserved in the 'Palazzo del T.' are the most celebrated of Diana Scultori's works. Adamo, Diana's brother, began work very young; his father placed the burin in his hand at a very early age. There exists a 'Virgin nursing the Infant Jesus,' signed 'Adamo Sculptor, an. xi.' So that when only eleven years old he had already copied an engraving of his father's. Beginning so young, his works were of course very numerous; we know more than a hundred engravings which bear his name.

They remind us of those by Diana, and, like hers, they render happily the compositions of Giulio Romano. They show particular aptitude in rendering the antique style of that master's works, and they even exaggerate the appearance of bas-relief in certain of his compositions. Adamo Scultori engaged in trade in engravings. We find his name under a great many

prints which he published without taking part in their production. Amongst these some were executed at the end of the century after Martinelli and Zuccharo.

We have restored their own name, Scultori, to these artists. It is not many years since they passed for members of the Ghisi family, because an artist of that name, the most illustrious of the Mantuan engravers, so completely combined all the essential qualities of the school founded under the influence of Giulio Romano, that he eclipsed the fame of the artists who preceded him. But there was no relation between Giorgio Ghisi and the Scultori. Their country was the same, that was all. Giorgio was born about 1520. He is supposed to have worked under Giovanni Battista Scultori with Diana and Adamo, with whom he had several qualities in common. He, however, soon surpassed them and left the school of Mantua earlier than they did. He went to Rome when still very young. There he studied Marc-Antonio's engravings, trying to imitate them, and taking his inspiration from compositions by Raphael and Michael Angelo. He engraved the 'Prophets and the Sibyls," after the latter, in which he showed consummate knowledge of drawing, and he managed to translate the grandeur of the compositions in the vault of the Sistine Chapel to his engravings. And yet, his burin being rather heavy, it has given a dull appearance to these noble figures, and the execution looks laboured. Nevertheless, these engravings by Giorgio Ghisi are very superior to those by other

artists of the school of Mantua, and with Marc-Antonio's works they are worthy to share the exalted position held by Giulio Romano's paintings after Raphael. In a word, they restore the style of that school, which, after being formed under Giulio Romano, was destined to rise to new eminence at Rome, where, at last, its members could admire the noble masterpieces of that great master, whose unrivalled style they had hitherto only seen as interpreted by his pupil.

After Giorgio Ghisi's death the influence of Marc-Antonio declined rapidly. Like the school of the great masters, Raphael and Michael Angelo, which disappeared completely in Italy at the end of the sixteenth century, after having attracted to their lessons not only nearly all the engravers of Italy, but even Frenchmen like Béatrizet, Germans like George Penez, Barth, Beham and Jacob Binck, his school also rapidly lost its authority. A new school sprang up at Rome, and the art was preserved for some time, but it abandoned the old principles, and in allowing themselves greater freedom of execution the successors of Marc-Antonio lost the noble and beautiful style so universal in Italian productions which had flourished until the middle of the sixteenth century. Mannerism replaced feeling, ease of style took the place of careful thought and true expression. The influence of Agostino Carracci now appears to have predominated, at least his manner was copied by a great many artists, who came to Rome in the seventeenth

century to the school of art which then attracted as many foreigners as native Italians. Battista Franco gave proof, at long intervals, of respect and admiration for great traditions, and his work was principally devoted to antique objects, but though his very careless drawing does not recall the style of Marc-Antonio, yet he was the only artist who still seems to have remembered that master. As for those who followed Franco —Giov. Batt. Coriolano and Valerian Regnart, the first engraved a number of vignettes coldly and incorrectly, the pompous subjects of which were suggested by the masters of his school; and the second gave his time to the reproduction of architectural drawings, armorial bearings, and allegorical compositions; for Allegory was now forcing its way everywhere, and was often incomprehensible by reason of its being so far-fetched; nevertheless, Oliviere Gatti, Francesco Brizio, Raffaelo Guidi, and many other Italians, habitually took their inspiration from it.

Cardinal Barberini, who became pope under the title of Urban VIII., patronised engraving, and suggested a great number of these futile inventions; the bees of the Papal armorial bearings fluttered in swarms about these prints, which were both harsh and wanting in individuality. Cornelius Cort, Franz Villamène, Jo. Fred. Greuter, and Theodore Cruger, arrived from Germany; Philip Thomassin, with a few competitors, hastened from France; and all,—German and French alike,—yielding to the general fascination, eagerly strove

to adopt the style of the most fashionable Roman artists. It is too certain that all the plates executed in Italy in the seventeenth century were so much alike that they might have been attributed to the same artists, had not their authors been careful to sign them. These engravers took their inspiration from late painters of Michael Angelo's school, and it is well known that this once admirable school, whose chief had executed such beautiful works, had already suffered from exaggeration of style under Baccio Bandinelli. In the works of the second generation of the disciples of the painter of the Sistine Chapel the style became altogether false, coarse, and bombastic.

Amongst the artists of the Roman school who remain to be named we must not forget Pietro Santo Bartoli, who with his skilful needle, seconded by his burin, reproduced a great number of bas-reliefs and antique statues. Winckelmann advised young people anxious to form a good idea of works of antiquity, to consult the engravings of Pietro Santo Bartoli, and this advice from the famous historian of art surely speaks well for the artist's works. But we are more exacting now than formerly. In our day the means of reproduction have attained such high excellence that we are not disposed to give Bartoli such unlimited admiration. His engravings after the Trajan column, for instance, whilst giving valuable information about the costumes and arms of the ancients, fail to give a correct idea of the figures of this monument.

The casts in the museum of the Louvre, which enable us to compare the copy with the original, compel us to be somewhat reserved. But in any case, Pietro Santo Bartoli was one of the first, if not to copy exactly the true character of ancient monuments, at least to devote his talent to them almost exclusively, and it was by aid of his engravings almost as much as by the works themselves, that Grecian and Roman art were made known to most of the artists born at the beginning of this century.

At the end of the eighteenth century, when engraving seemed almost extinct in the rest of Italy, it still survived in Rome. Two artists of about equal talent, Domenico Cunego and Antonio Capellani, applied themselves to reproducing several works by Michael Angelo, which could only be known at Rome. Domenico was born at Verona in 1727, and at first devoted himself to painting; he worked with Francesco Ferrari; then, after studying the first principles of engraving in Germany he established himself in Rome, and it was there that he became so enamoured of Michael Angelo, that he set himself to engrave the paintings in the Sistine Chapel; Antonio Capellani joined him in this enterprise. Born at Venice about 1740, he had left his home to settle at Rome, and he engraved 'The Creation of Woman,' and 'Adam and Eve driven from the Garden of Eden.' Neither of these artists drew with sufficient accuracy to copy these almost sublime works. They fell far short of their

models, their engravings are heavy and wanting in ease, and give but a very inadequate idea of the originals, and the principal merit of these artists is that they rendered works which no one had hitherto attempted to copy.

Here must close the history of engraving in Italy. To pursue our inquiry further would be to exceed the limits of our plan. We could doubtless further notice the ultra-picturesque works of the brothers Piranesi, and refer to artists nearer our own time, who for a moment appeared likely to revive the art of engraving in Italy. Raphael Morghen, Paolo Toschi, and Giuseppe Longhi, enjoyed a considerable reputation at the beginning of this century, which was justified to a certain extent by their skill in handling the graver. But these artists, working almost entirely at pictures produced two centuries before, could not identify themselves with their models, and therefore remained inferior to them. In occupying ourselves only with the masters of art, and mentioning the names of those artists who at different times drew upon themselves the attention of men of taste, and were remarkable for great originality, we have perhaps given a better notion of the grandeur of Italian art than we should have done had we spoken of every one and meted out to each a portion of praise or blame.

CHAPTER III.

ENGRAVING IN SPAIN.

Giuseppe Ribera and Francesco Goya.

IT is almost impossible to write the history of engraving in Spain. Scarcely anything is known of the art of this country beyond its own shores, and native historians, or those who resided long enough in Spain to make the national art the object of their studies, agree in stating that engraving was very little practised and still less encouraged. We know that some anonymous prints are attributed to Velasquez and Murillo ; they do recall the style of these masters, and are evidently reproductions of their pictures, but we cannot name their authors with any certainty. Without conclusive proofs all conjectures are valueless. Ribera is the only celebrated painter born in Spain whom we know to have been also a line-engraver. His style is easy, and the colouring of

Fig. 6.—A Poet. Engraved by GIUSEPPE RIBERA.

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his engravings, like that of his paintings, is somewhat harsh; his prints deserve the esteem in which they are generally held; 'Poetry' and 'The Martyrdom of St. Bartholomew,' Ribera's best works, would be an honour to any school.

But after that of Ribera we find no famous name until the beginning of the seventeenth century; the plates by Salvador Carmona, Manuel Esquivel, Francesco Muntaner and other artists equally inferior in talent are not enough to represent a school. These engravers, who confined themselves to the burin, generally copied valueless works, which they reproduced barrenly and without beauty, and if they did turn to a master, like Velasquez, they failed to render the grandeur and harmonious colouring of that great master's works. To find a man of real originality and skill, therefore, we must pass on to Francesco Goya, the only engraver of whom Spain may be justly proud. He was born at Fuendetolos, in Aragon, on the 30th of March, 1746, and died at Bordeaux on the 16th of April, 1828. He was in turn a painter, an engraver, and a lithographer. His latest historian, M. Charles Yriarte, has reviewed his frescoes, his *genre* paintings, portraits, and engravings, in a large volume. They are very numerous, but judging from those we have seen and the copies in Yriarte's book, we think Goya's reputation is enhanced when he is studied through his engravings, for then his skill cannot be denied, whereas we are of opinion that the merits of

many of his portraits and paintings, especially those of sacred subjects, have been much exaggerated.* They are remarkable for a certain sombre harmony of tint, but the drawing of his figures is careless, and the artist does not value beauty highly enough, he seems voluntarily to set it aside, and to delight in horrible scenes. His engravings show the same tendencies, but they call up our admiration by the skill of the execution ; and the truthfulness of the action depicted in some measure rewards one for what is repulsive and gloomy in the subjects chosen. Goya is the painter of passion and of life, he is a sceptic, a mocker never satisfied. He has constituted himself the apostle of liberty for his oppressed country, and he is entirely engrossed with this one idea. The awful massacres at which he invites us to look, are the work of despotism, and, as interpreted by his imagination, they appear more horrible than they were in reality. Fancy plays a large part in Goya's engravings, and the magic charm of chiaroscuro is called in to conceal incorrectness of drawing and palpable errors of taste. This engraver's special task, the skilful combination of aquatint and etching, is also full of interest. Goya was pre-eminently successful in this method of engraving which no artist

* The greater number of engravings published by Goya were after his own drawings, but some few reproduce portraits by Velasquez. The latter, entirely etched, give a very good idea of the original paintings.

Fig. 7.—The Condemned. An etching by FRANCISCO GOYA.

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before his time had employed, and he is the only artist of genius of a distinctively Spanish character. He will be remembered also because he introduced a process of engraving which Rembrandt himself, the master of chiaroscuro, the prince of etchers, had foreseen but not employed.

CHAPTER IV.

ENGRAVING IN THE LOW COUNTRIES.

Engravers on Wood in the 15th Century. Early Engravers on Metal—Holland : Rembrandt, Ruysdael, and Paul Potter—Belgium : Rubens, Bolswert, Paul Pontius and Anthony Vandyck.

IT is difficult to abstain from studying the art of Flanders and that of Holland together. From the first these two countries had interests in common : art assumed the same character for a time, and did not attain to separate and distinct importance until the middle of the seventeenth century, when Rembrandt on one side, and Rubens on the other, founded and directed a school, each in his respective country.

The question as to whether the first wood engravings were printed in Germany or the Low Countries has always been the subject of earnest debate. Strange to say, the history of the origin of engraving, which is intimately connected with that of printing, becomes more and more obscure in proportion to the

number of fresh documents discovered. Those who bring out these documents, with a date throwing back the invention for a few years, are generally too much blinded by vanity to be much enlightened by them. The greater number of the historians of engraving, who are Germans at heart and by birth, are unwilling to relinquish for their country the honour of the invention of engraving, but the Dutch energetically maintain a right of priority, which we consider worthy of belief. Let us not forget to add, that the Italians, not without pride, bring documents to support similar pretensions; and that the French have attempted, but it must be owned without any success, to take a place among the first inventors of this art.

Engraving on Wood.—We think that it was in the Low Countries, at Haarlem, that the 'Speculum Humanæ Salvationis' first appeared. It is a religious work ornamented with woodcuts, which show some knowledge of art, and testify much more to a desire for good composition than the single pictures previously published. Four editions of this work, all without date, the name of the printer, or of the town in which they were published, succeeded each other. Two, however, are in Dutch, and two in Latin, and certain scholars, good judges in such matters, think the Dutch dialect the same as that spoken in the Low Countries about the close of the fourteenth century or the beginning of the fifteenth, thereby justifying our opinion of the origin of these books. We look in vain

in Germany or elsewhere for any former work at all equal to the 'Speculum Humanæ Salvationis,' or the 'Biblia Pauperum.' In them the influence of the Van Eycks is manifest, the style resembles theirs in every particular. The authority of the Van Eycks was greater than that of any painter until the beginning of the fifteenth century. This fact must be borne in mind, for a school does not really exist until it produces a work worthy of admiration or interest; in art, as in everything else, an invention is not truly useful or praiseworthy until its results are tangible.

Although compelled to deny to the Germans a glory, in the defence of which they have employed so much patient study, real knowledge, and long research, we cannot but acknowledge, that the advantage enjoyed by the Low Countries is more than counterbalanced by the important part taken by Germany in the development of engraving, and we must carefully study the art at the head of which stand two such great German masters as Albert Dürer and Martin Schöngauer.

To the Low Countries, then, in addition to the honour of the discovery of printing (subsequently turned to such good account by Gutenberg), belongs also the equal distinction of having produced the first woodcuts worthy of notice. The books quoted above replaced the manuscripts hitherto in use. This was a great boon, for the latter, requiring much careful labour, were very expensive, and of course attainable

only by those in easy circumstances, the poor being inevitably compelled to remain in ignorance. It is true that several engravings with short legends attached to them were published, but they could not be considered efficient means of education. Printing happily changed this great inequality, and we can understand how useful xylography and typography were to each other when combined.

The school of painting directed by the Van Eycks, and in which Hans Memling was a pupil, became so famous that a new impulse was given to engraving; many artists gladly availing themselves of it to multiply the works of these masters. Although not sharing all the resources of painting this art is more directly profitable and does not require such thorough study.* At Amsterdam and Antwerp books were published, which proved the usefulness of the discovery, containing engravings remarkable for clearness of execution and rare truthfulness. There were, indeed, no models to be found elsewhere equal to those that Flemish artists had at their command, and when not copying the master's works literally they could not entirely free themselves from their influence.

The names of the numerous woodcutters of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries are unknown, and it is therefore difficult to describe

* The engravings on wood which appeared in the Low Countries about the 15th century are very numerous.

their works accurately. All early Flemish engravings were influenced by the style of art in fashion at the court of the Dukes of Burgundy, and the engraved designs on box or pear-tree wood resemble each other too much to admit of classification. The figures are stunted, often deformed, the heads poor, the expressions exaggerated; but the movements are generally justly rendered, and the actual cutting is skilful. Those bearing the monogram I.A. separated by a double A. crossed by a V., and attributed to Jacob Cornelisz or John Walter Van Assen, are picturesque and cut with manual dexterity.

Engraving on Metal.—Early engravers on metal in the Low Countries resembled their predecessors, the wood engravers, in their style, if one may apply such a term to these primitive efforts. They were inspired by the same influence, guided by the same mind. An anonymous artist, called, for want of better information, 'The Engraver of 1480,' left a great number of prints. We have examined them in the museum at Amsterdam. The drawing of all exhibits the same indecision, but they are well engraved. They are of sacred subjects or gay scenes, and are fair specimens of the art of the period. Designs which were thoroughly worked out by miniature and other painters lost much of their perfection under the hands of line engravers, the movements of the figures became distorted, and sometimes almost grotesque. The Van Eycks and Hans Memling exercised but little influence over 'The

Engraver of 1480;' he failed, for instance, to give to the face of the Virgin the purity and simplicity in which the masters of the school of Bruges so much delighted. He preferred to take his inspiration from the early painters of Cologne, and his style in consequence partly resembles that of the school on the borders of the Rhine, but he was thoroughly Dutch in his mode of working on copper. This was his chief merit, his line engravings are fine and of delicate workmanship, and he may have been a goldsmith before he became an engraver of prints.

Another anonymous artist, known as the 'Master of the Shuttle,' or Zwoll, worked, according to historians, about the same time as the 'Master of 1480,' but his art is more advanced, and his style more decided. The harshness of some of his plates recalls the early school, but others seem to have been produced as late as the middle of the sixteenth century. In 'Christ on the Cross,' for instance, a very large engraving for the age in which it appeared, the Virgin lying insensible at the foot of the cross is not unlike the same figure in a painting by Quentin Matsys, exhibited in the museum of Antwerp. We do not mean to say that the engraver copied the works of the great Antwerp painter born about 1460, but we do think that he was one of his imitators, or was at least aided by his genius. He used the graver skilfully, but he was ignorant of the progress made in other countries. The 'Master of the Shuttle' probably never left the Low

Countries, or heard of the engravings of Italy and Germany; his style is entirely free from foreign influence, and he copied none but compositions of sacred subjects in the style of the school patronized by the Dukes of Burgundy. He certainly would have yielded to the influence of Martin Schöngauer, who lived before him, had he studied his works.

Soon after the artists we have named, a master arose who revived all the peculiarities of the early school, and occupies a large space in the history of art. We allude to Lucas of Leyden, born in 1493. He learnt engraving with an armourer and goldsmith, and gave early proof of talent. In 1508, that is, at fifteen years of age, he produced his first engraving, which, with his succeeding work, presaged a glorious future, although his style as yet was timid. Lucas of Leyden paid more attention to perspective than any former engraver. This carefulness of relative proportions added greatly to the apparent size of the space in which the scenes were depicted. Lucas of Leyden knew Albert Dürer, and when that great artist visited Antwerp in 1520, exchanged some engravings with him, but he did not borrow so much from the illustrious German as other contemporary artists. He retained his peculiar style of interpreting nature, and his mode of engraving remained unchanged. Experience gave him greater mastery over his tools, but his manner is the same in his earliest and latest works. He took his models from those around him, and did not hesitate

Autotype.

ECCE HOMO.

From the Engraving by Lucas Van Leyden.

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to dress the Queen of Sheba, Esther, or Dalilah in the costumes of the richer classes of Holland. His innate sense of beauty enabled him to realize a glorious ideal far nearer true beauty than that attained by any other master of his time. His 'Ecce Homo' may be considered one of his chief compositions from an artistic point of view; but it is also full of another kind of interest. The scene is laid in the public square of a Flemish town surrounded by gabled houses, and here, as usual, indifferent to historical truth, the engraver has given the executioners and spectators the costumes of his own age. We are, therefore, indebted to him for a very important record of the manners and costumes of the people of the Netherlands in the first half of the sixteenth century. Lucas of Leyden did not despise homely scenes, although he preferred sacred and exalted subjects. He produced works in which peasants and beggars are the chief actors. One of them, 'The Peasants Travelling,' known as 'The Uylenspiegel, is the choicest and most sought after of all his works. This engraving, by an artist devoted to elegance and refinement, led to the production of an enormous number of prints of beggars and peasants by Teniers, the Ostades, Dusart, and their followers.

The contemporary engravers of Lucas of Leyden, who worked with him, shared neither his genius nor his style, they shook off his influence, and their works are poor. Dirck van Staren, surnamed the 'Master

of the Star,' was an exception. He has proved himself a clever engraver and designer in some engravings signed with the letters D. V., separated by a star, viz., 'St. Luke painting the Virgin,' 'The Deluge,' and 'A

Fig. 8.—The Uylenspiegel. Engraved by LUCAS OF LEYDEN.

Saint kneeling before the Virgin, holding the Infant Jesus in her arms.' The figures are elegant and refined, and rare skill in ornamentation is seen in the

decoration of St. Luke's studio. The style resembles that of Lucas of Leyden, and these engravings by the 'Master of the Star' are worthy of all esteem.

The 'Master of the Crab' worked about the same time as the 'Master of the Star;' he was of an independent spirit, and troubled himself little about the style of his predecessors. The Madonnas he engraved are ugly and pretentious, exaggerated and badly drawn; his original figures are stunted and awkward, he drew coarsely, and his work with the graver was unskilful. Indeed, we think his works are famous for their rarity rather than for their merit, which has been much exaggerated. Albert Claas published and signed a number of engravings about the same time as the 'Master of the Crab.' He had not much original power. At first he was content to be a mere copyist. He imitated engravings by Lucas of Leyden, Beham, Aldegrever, and Albert Dürer, and he might be included amongst the *petits maîtres* (the Little Masters), but his style of engraving had not that firmness of hand which is seen in the work of the artists included under this title. His figures are not sufficiently careful; he used a sharp graver, and his strokes are very far apart. He did not confine himself to copies alone, but the drawings in which the composition and engraving are both attributed to him are not original enough to render them worthy of esteem; they betoken facility of execution, but the design is poor, and the expression worthless.

Cornelius Matzys, another Dutch artist, also partly belongs to the school of the *petits maîtres*. The engravings signed with his monogram, produced between 1537 and 1552, are mostly small. They are also his best; he is at home and interesting when he represents peasant men and women talking in twos and threes, running together, or telling one another their troubles. Unfortunately he went to Italy, altered his style, and unsuccessfully tried to improve himself by studying Italian masterpieces. 'The Miraculous Draught of Fishes,' a large engraving for him, fell short of his former works; he could not reproduce Raphael, his rendering of the celebrated cartoon is poor and incorrect. It was the same with all Matzys' engravings produced under Italian influence. This was not surprising, for the new principles, the new traditions, were totally opposed to those of his own land. A Dutchman might give a certain Italian appearance to his works, it is true, but they could scarcely fail to lose in the process. Unfortunately the mania for Italy and the Italian style was universal in the Low Countries in the sixteenth century, and artists did not discover their mistake until the seventeenth century, when Rembrandt and Rubens introduced a new order of things. From the time of Lucas of Leyden until then no work worthy of remark was produced by the artists of Holland or of Flanders. Lambert-Lombard, Adrien Collaert, Martin Hemrskerke, Dirck Volkert Curenbert, and a number of

others spent the greater part of their lives at Rome, and exhausted their powers in striving after an ideal beyond their reach. The immense number of their works only injured their art. Working for trade, engravers inundated the market with sacred subjects, and devoting themselves to allegory, the passion of Italy in her decline, they forgot to care for beauty and truth in their haste to produce fresh impressions.

It is a relief to turn to works which are the glory of the school of the Netherlands, and prove how powerful it really was.

Hitherto we have considered Dutch and Flemish art together; we can no longer do so, for their interests and tendencies cease to be identical. Holland takes an independent position; a great master is born to her, who abruptly changes the customs of her school, and assumes the lead in art. His name is Rembrandt Van Rhyn.

Rembrandt was born in 1607.* His birthplace is

* The date of Rembrandt's birth has been much discussed. The registers of the municipality of Leyden, which alone could have decided the question, are lost for the period under discussion. We are, therefore, left to conjectures which rest on the authority of Orlers, the Burgomaster of Leyden, and upon some dated engravings and the artist's marriage certificate, in which he declares himself to be 26 years old on the 10th of June, 1634. We here adopt the opinion of M. C. Vosmaer (*Rembrandt Harmens van Rijn, ses précurseurs et ses années d'apprentissage*, printed at Hague, 1863, pp. iv.–vi.), who, after examining all the accounts by historians of this master, concludes, although with hesitation, that Rembrandt was born in 1607.

unknown, but everything seems to prove that he first saw the light in Leyden, where his family had been established for a long time. His father at first intended him to study law, and began by making him learn Latin, that he might be prepared to go through the course required at the University of Leyden. But Rembrandt had so great a taste for drawing and painting, that his parents yielded to his wishes, and placed him with Jacob Isaacson van Swanenburg, an artist almost unknown in our time. Rembrandt studied with this painter for three years; he then attended successively the studios of Peter Lastman and Jacob Pinas. Having learnt the elements of his art from them, he returned to his father's house at Leyden to work alone. He soon gained an extensive reputation, his first engravings and paintings were so good that he received several orders for portraits from Amsterdam. On the 22nd of June, 1634, Rembrandt married a wealthy native of Friesland, Saskia Uilenburg. By this marriage he had two children, one of whom died very young, and the other, Titus Rembrandt, followed his father's profession, but without success. After eight years of married life Saskia also died, leaving her entire fortune under her husband's control, on condition that he should give her son a thorough education and allot him a portion on his marriage.

Rembrandt did not long remain a widower; there is no authentic record of his second marriage, but the

Autotype.

JAN SYLVIUS.

From the Etching by Rembrandt.

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registers of Amsterdam prove the birth of two children some time after Saskia's death. Rembrandt's life, devoted to study, furnishes small material for biography. He seldom left Amsterdam, never went abroad, and found plenty of models of every kind ready to his hand. Rembrandt's works, now so sought after and prized by amateurs, and which are disputed for by museums and public buildings, were not thought much of during his life. In 1656, after the production of his best works, Rembrandt was declared insolvent, and compelled to sell his house, his furniture, his very studio! This unfortunate occurrence was a terrible blow to the artist. Although he worked hard and produced many masterpieces, amongst others, 'The Trustees of the Draper's Guild,' in the Museum of Amsterdam (1661), he sank more and more into obscurity. The date of his death remained long unknown or was incorrectly reported, and it was not discovered until lately in a document taken from the civil registers of Amsterdam: "Rembrandt was buried in this town on the 8th of October, 1669."

Rembrandt founded the Dutch school properly so called, and we may add that he completely represents it. He created every variety of subject, and in every style proved himself to be an inimitable artist. In compositions of the highest order, such as 'Jesus Christ healing the Sick,' or 'The Resurrection of Lazarus,' his magic needle obtained results from etching of which it was not deemed

capable. This branch of engraving would appear to be suited only to homely subjects, or compositions to be dashed off at one sitting, but Rembrandt's genius raised it to the height of glory, and enabled it to compete successfully with the engraving of history. And when the master turns to domestic scenes, when he leads us to the synagogue, or shows us the sculptor modelling a statuette, or the cook surrounded by her children tossing her cakes in the frying-pan, he gives to these familiar subjects a spirit, a power, a touch of nature, which are irresistibly interesting and attractive. He surpasses every one in his noble and life-like portraits. Jan Lutma, the Burgomaster Six, or Rembrandt himself, will live for ever in the etchings which so faithfully render the wit, the energy, and the singularity of their physiognomies. Rembrandt was also a thorough master of landscape design. Holland has had many great landscape painters, but none represented this artificial country with so much truth as Rembrandt. The boundless horizons of this flat country, the wondrous canals, the windmills, are all given without monotony or exaggeration; and so admirably has Rembrandt chosen his point of view and arranged his subjects, that, whilst strictly adhering to truth, he has given an interesting and picturesque appearance to this damp and melancholy land. Rembrandt had some imitators, but no pupils who followed his example step by step. Too original himself to tolerate servile copying, or to

Fig. 9.—A Landscape. An Etching by REMBRANDT VAN RHYN.

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do more than encourage, his unthinking genius could only arouse the ambition of some few engravers to follow up the work he had begun. Thus J. Livens, Ferdinand Bol, and Van Uliet, in attempting to conform themselves strictly to the examples of this master's style, remained far behind their models, and in the end obtained but a moderate reputation. The inferiority of these artists is seen when, applying themselves directly to the works of Rembrandt, they sought to reproduce the distinguishing beauties by the process employed by that artist. These three imitators repeatedly engraved Rembrandt's works, and not without talent; their engravings never show more beauty than when they trod in their illustrious master's footsteps. As for their own compositions, which they produced on copper, they betray an intention to imitate Rembrandt, and at the same time an exaggeration in the drawing which spoils the figures; and though Rembrandt himself, even when drawing common and low phases of life, always remained grand and gave a poetry to the most insignificant subjects, his imitators, less scrupulous because less clever, were not afraid of deviating from truth in the action of their figures which are often frightful.

We are indebted to this love of humble subjects, such as beggars and peasants, for a great number of excellent Dutch compositions. The artists who chose this kind of work were evidently painters as well as engravers, and, unlike their predecessors, they did not

go abroad, but were content with the plentiful models close at hand. Their works are charming because they are true. As their country did not offer types of grandeur in the inhabitants, or varied aspects of beauty in the scenery, they applied themselves to the faithful representation of what really met their eyes. The smoking rooms and taverns to which we are introduced by Ostade or Brauwer are full of life and animation. We see that their engraver was at home in them. Adrien Brauwer, of Haarlem, is said to have frequented them too much; according to some historians he led a life of drunkenness and debauchery. He died at the age of thirty-four, leaving some etchings of great delicacy and power. Adrien Van Ostade led a less irregular life, and as an engraver he takes higher rank. He devoted his exceptional talent to the home scenes of his native land; his numerous engravings are delightful on account of the spirit and life of the figures. Whether gay and joyous, or busy over household cares, his characters do well what they are employed in; their faces are true, their gestures life-like; they act, they live, they are full of individuality. Ostade possessed this gift of vivid representation in a great degree; when he shows us an artist at work in his studio in a tall cap, we distinctly see how the painter's attention is fixed on his work, how carefully he is covering his canvas.

The imitators of Ostade fell far short of their model. Cornelius Dusart drew heavily, and his ideal is even

more insignificant and trivial than that of his contemporaries. It is strange that the Dutch, so successful with physiognomy, could not represent youth; their lovers, male and female, are wrinkled and frightfully ugly; the children playing round their parents are old and clumsy, their attitudes are all that is young about them. These second-rate Dutch artists never so much as dreamt of representing beauty and elegance of form. Cornelius Bega, another pupil of Ostade, imitated his master as closely as did Dusart. He, too, delighted to represent peasants at table in taverns, gossiping at the door of an inn, or busied with household cares, but his engravings are wanting in the delicacy which distinguishes those of Ostade. They are harsh, and the faces of his beggars are not always correct.

We have said that Dutch artists of the seventeenth century did not attempt to make the human figure at all beautiful. To atone for this, a number of artists equally skilful with brush and graver, applied themselves with the greatest success to the representation of animals in all their beauty and nobility. Of these masters Paul Potter is the most distinguished, and the animals he painted or engraved are grander than any before produced. He idealised his model without compromising truth. His engraving of the 'Friesland Horse' is bold in execution, and competes with the productions of these schools which were famous for their grandeur.

Nicolas Berghem was as successful with animals as

any of his fellow-countrymen. His much-sought-for paintings and engravings are equally delicate, clear, and refined. His compositions—in which the animals are better than the figures — are set in landscapes designed with great care. He delighted in foliage; his delicate needle has thrown the light on the right places, the shadows are never confused, the air circulates freely, giving life to all it touches.

Adrian Van der Velde painted both animate and inanimate nature, but he engraved animals only. He had great original talent, and the power and correctness of his work recalls the style of Berghem. Theodore Stoop was less confined and crowded in his work; he gave his chief attention to horses, and the figures he introduces are cleverly designed and arranged. Philip Wouvermann has signed but one engraving. But in this finely caparisoned young horse he has shown with what success he could work at etching. His evident inexperience has not injured the correctness of the forms, and in spite of its soiled appearance this engraving is well worth the attention of amateurs. Karel Dujardin evidently loved the life of the fields. He strictly followed Paul Potter as long as he remained in his native land. He engraved numbers of animals, illustrating their habits and explaining their natures. Some sleep in sheer idleness, stretched on their sides or wallowing in the mud; others accustomed to work, ruminate peacefully, or browse carelessly upon the grass. Dujardin's en-

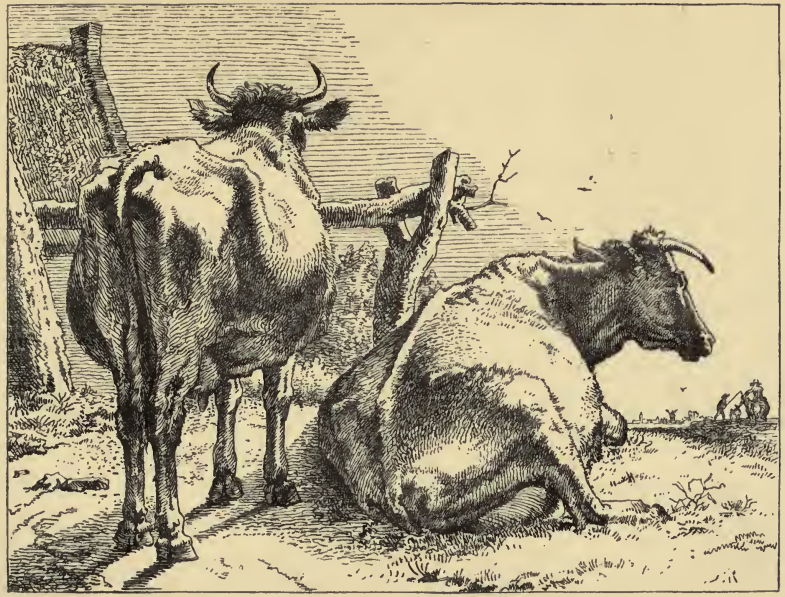

Fig. 10.—Two Cows. An Etching by PAUL POTTER.

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Autotype.

SHEEP AND GOATS.

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graving is clear, the outlines bold and distinct; he never betrays weariness. One day, under pretence of seeing a friend off who was going to Leghorn, Karel Dujardin set out for Italy. He was so much struck with the skies and landscapes of the Roman Empire, that he deserted animals and became a landscape painter. His works in Italy were large, but the arrangement of them is not always good, and the execution is laboured. No wonder the successful Dutch artist found such a complete change of style very difficult, and felt almost intimidated before the grandeur of the scenery round Rome.

Other landscape painters followed Karel Dujardin's example, and went to Italy after studying in Holland, but these distant wanderings were less injurious than we should have feared, as the emigrants did not leave their country until they knew enough of their art to be able to profit by the novel instructions they were going to receive. John Both, the most celebrated of them, gained the surname of 'Both of Italy.' He was born at Utrecht in 1610. In company with his brother Andrew Both, with whom he generally worked, he travelled first through France and then through Italy, making a long stay in the latter. It is strange that he learnt to understand Italian art through the works of the well-known French artist Claude Gellée. The influence of the Lorraine master is more evident in his paintings than in his etchings; in his engravings he addressed himself directly to nature. He truth-

fully rendered the vast horizons bounded by high mountains and enlivened by large trees and well-known buildings. His art accommodated itself to the peculiarities of different countries, and his style was affected by the beauty of the landscapes he subsequently visited. William of Heusch, a fellow-countryman and disciple of John Both, followed his example and sought his models in Italy. He engraved the scenes of that country very truthfully, and we must not be severe in our criticism, remembering how much he accomplished by means of a process so little fitted to render the grandeur of the scenes he chose. Herman Swanevelt spent the greater part of his life in Italy, and yielded entirely to the influence of Claude Lorraine, addressing himself directly to that master's works. His engravings show this influence, but the execution is cold and monotonous.

Jacob Ruysdael, the greatest landscape painter of Holland, did not know Italy, and never left his native town, Haarlem. We need not here speak of his talent as a painter, and some of his engravings are quite equal to his pictures. His style is easy, his drawing skilful and decided; he is pre-eminently successful in rendering trees and foliage; his work is always clear and distinct. The light is vivid and cleverly distributed, whilst the shadows are rendered with truth and care. The warm colouring of his pictures is reproduced in his engravings. His works are not numerous; 'The Corn Field,' and the 'Travellers,'

Fig. 11.—A Corn Field. An Etching by JACOB RUYSDAEL.

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are good illustrations of his great and noble genius. The first is an unrivalled work. A simple corn-field shut in by tall trees, the leafy boughs, the tangled shrubs, the gentle breeze, the tender light, even the refreshing fragrance of the country, are all happily and clearly rendered. Anthony Waterloo never left Holland, and was seldom absent from Utrecht, his native place. Unlike most of the artists we have named, he acquired greater reputation as an engraver than as a painter. His fame exceeded his merits. His etchings are monotonous and laboured, and he had recourse to the burin to bring any object, such as the trunk of a tree or a tangled bough, into prominence. This practice was new to the Dutch school, and had its disadvantages. It is easy enough to make soft and pleasing strokes with the graver, but they retain undue importance when the rest of an etching begins to fade from the worn-out plates. Bad impressions are the result, and Waterloo's works were no exceptions. The scenes he represented are of little variety or extent. A corner of a forest with a winding lane, a mill above a torrent, a cottage overshadowed by a few trees,—such are the aspects of nature in which this artist delighted. He never attempted to render Holland's characteristic landscapes, its vast horizons, or its boundless plains watered by countless canals.

The sea shared with the forests, the green hillocks, and the plains of Holland, the enthusiasm of inter-

preters, and Rembrandt, who inaugurated the marine style, was as successful in it as in everything else. Those who followed him were not so fortunate. Louis Backuysen, one of the cleverest Dutch painters, engraved several sea-pieces with the needle, which are wanting in his usual skill. The effect of the wind on the sea is well given, but his last efforts were too hastily executed, and the figures on the sterns of the vessels are clumsy and incorrect. On canvas Backuysen renders eloquently the most majestic aspects of the sea, but on copper he is weak and irresolute.

Isaiah Van der Velde was not more successful; he tried to represent seaports crowded with ships, or skaters gliding over the ice; but the abrupt and harsh hatchings of his needle, crossed by strokes of the graver, most inadequately render the appearance of the sea, the river, or the canal he is drawing. Peter Bout used a very fine needle, and drew charming little villages washed and shut in by the sea; but the figures in his sea-pieces want character, and his designs are not well finished. Nevertheless, he accomplished something, and his five or six known sea-pieces give a true idea of the appearance of the North Sea. René Nooms, now generally known under the name of Zeeman (seaman), was born at Amsterdam about 1612. He was so passionately fond of painting the sea, that he embarked as a simple sailor, and made several voyages in order to study the fickle element in her smiling and angry moods, and to learn the construc-

tion of vessels. It is to this special education that his engravings owe the truthfulness so little shared by contemporary works; and if the gazer does not find in Zeeman's engravings an understanding of effect, or great beauty in the execution, the historian will prize them for their truthfulness and precision, as well as for the information they afford.

Side by side with the followers of Rembrandt, who produced famous and valuable etchings, arose an equally celebrated school of artists who employed the graver, and left to posterity striking proofs of their talent. We have spoken of the unfortunate tendency of beginners to desert their own land for Italy, and especially for Rome, where they learnt of the artists of the decadence, and parodied their works. We have now to consider artists who took a higher tone. They too left their country for a time, but when they had learnt all they could from foreign masters they returned home and devoted the greater part of their existence to reproducing the works of their fellow-countrymen. This school of Dutch line-engravers did not arise till the seventeenth century. After Crispin Van de Pass, who gave to his works a warm and pleasant tint, we find a number of artists who, we may say, used the graver too boldly. At first Henry Goltzius was timid and almost too anxious about delicacy and precision, his small portraits rivalled miniatures, and were equal to the most delicate works ever engraved, but as soon as he felt himself

master of his instrument, he took an entirely different course, and, recalling Albert Dürer's style, he published some of the most extravagant prints imagination ever conceived. By means of deep strokes at wide intervals he tried to reproduce works complicated and pedantic, and succeeded too well in literally copying these exaggerated forms, and whilst gaining the reputation of being one of the cleverest line-engravers of Holland, he lost that of a correct and skilful designer, which his first works had gained for him. It is to be regretted that he had many imitators. His manner attracted those who were fond of novelty and cared little by what means they attained notoriety.

Amongst the least intelligent of Goltzius' imitators were John Saenredam and John Müller. It is impossible to exceed their skill in using the needle, or engraving on copper; but their very ease of execution led them to delight in terribly distorted forms. Their ambition was to vanquish apparently insurmountable difficulties and they were always absorbed in the desire to show their power. They took their models chiefly from Bartholomew Spranger, the most affected artist of the school. James Matham, another pupil of Goltzius, was not content with his master's lessons. He made a long stay in Italy, and at Rome took counsel with his countryman, Cornelius Bloemaert. But this new teaching spoilt his originality, although he learnt from it to seek something better than complicated subjects and exaggerated forms: he

Fig. 12.—Costume. Engraved by HENRY GOLTZIUS.

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engraved after Zuccaro, and sometimes even after Raphael and Titian. His prints merely produce with a weary monotony the works of these great masters. His portraits alone, which show careful study of physiognomy, are worthy of notice. Henry Hondius never left the Hague, his native place. For fifty years he superintended a studio there in which many artists were educated. It is not easy to define his manner, it is dry and wanting in grandeur. He had not sufficient talent to give his pupils and the artists he employed—for he was rather a publisher than a master-engraver—a true impulse; the prints which bear his name, either as publisher or engraver, are of no particular value.

After line-engraving had been practised in Holland for a long time, with more or less success, a moment came when this art attained to so considerable a position that neighbouring countries might well have been jealous. In the middle of the seventeenth century a national school of painting arose entirely under the influence of Rembrandt, and engravers sprung up ready to reproduce the new painters' compositions and their own, and to spread abroad the fame of those who guided them. A Dutchman, Peter Soutman, born at Haarlem about 1580, who attended Rubens' studio, and successfully engraved some of his works, seems to have given the impulse to this new school of engraving. He attracted and won the confidence of young engravers. Jonas Suyderoef entered his studio

and borrowed from his master the convenient process of combining line engraving with etching. In this mode of working aquafortis plays a secondary part, being employed merely to prepare the plate and is disused altogether when the graver begins its work. Amongst Jonas Suyderoef's works—important on account of the portraits after P. Soutman, Franz Hals, and Rubens, which they contain—there is one plate which would alone suffice to render him famous as an artist. We allude to the 'Peace of Munster,' after Gerard Terburg, which contains no less than fifty portraits—those of the plenipotentiaries met together to sign the treaty. This grand engraving shows exceptional knowledge of physiognomy, the picture is reproduced with extraordinary exactness, and in this case we may safely assert that the engraver was a worthy rival of the painter. Cornelius Visscher was also a pupil of P. Soutman. His style differs from his master's more than did that of Jonas Suyderoef. From Soutman, it is true, he learnt scrupulously to respect the models before him; but his mode of reproducing the works he composed or copied was very different. He seldom used aquafortis, but worked on the bare copper with the tool. At first his style was very formal, and his plates resembled the feeblest efforts of a Polish painter, Jeremiah Falck, who spent some time in Holland. His manner, however, rapidly changed as his talent became developed. Visscher engraved the portrait of Peter Scriverius under the

direction of Peter Soutman, and he did not fail to bear witness to his master's share in this work, which he signed thus : '*Corn. Visscher sculpsit. P. Soutmanno dirigente.*' An act of respect the more praiseworthy, as in this engraving the pupil is already seen to be superior to his master. Visscher's works are too numerous for us to name all the best, it will be better merely to single out those which are universally admired : 'The Ratcatcher' and 'The Cook' are worthy of taking first rank in the history of engraving. This artist was still more successful with his portraits ; he excelled in representing flesh, and his works, like his subjects, are of infinite variety. A clear and powerful colourist, a skilful and accurate designer, he knew how to profit by the examples of his predecessors, and his works bear witness to his great admiration for Rembrandt, Franz Hals, and Van der Helst.

Cornelius Van Dalen, who followed C. Visscher's instructions, did not handle the graver with equal ease. But in this excellent school he acquired respect for good drawing and knowledge of colouring. The portraits of Alphonse d'Este, of Aretino, and of Boccaccio are considered Cornelius Van Dalen's best works ; they are certainly his simplest. C. Van Dalen required to work from a good model or from nature ; when employed on an inferior composition his want of interest is evident. When he engraved works after Rubens or Flinck, which suited his taste, he rendered the powerful colouring of these masters

with peculiar skill, and at the same time gave proof of his own great knowledge. But his portraits are his best works. Whether he drew from nature or borrowed his model from Gov. Flinck, J. Livens, or other less famous Dutch portrait-painters, his works are remarkable for powerful execution and knowledge of physiognomy.

Abraham Bloteling also belonged to the school of Cornelius Visscher. He was born at Amsterdam in 1634. His works are very numerous and more varied than those of the artists we have named ; and although they do not take first rank, they show that their author had a certain skill in different styles. His etchings are poor with the exception of one masterpiece, the portrait of the painter, Gov. Flinck ; but all his portraits are better than his compositions. He employed mezzotint largely and has left many engravings in it. He only attained true superiority when he left his own country for England, and worked at pictures by Sir Peter Lely and other clever portrait-painters.

At the end of the seventeenth century Dutch art began to decline, or rather it almost entirely disappeared. Genius became rarer and rarer. We find good workmen it is true, but they were workmen, not artists ; the skill of Rembrandt and his imitators, with Cornelius Visscher at their head, was gone never to return. Romyn de Hooghe engraved a great variety of subjects with surprising rapidity ; battles, ceremo-

nials, costumes, portraits, were all rendered by this artist's fertile imagination, but he had no taste and was ignorant of the laws of drawing. John Luyken although far less skilful than Romyn de Hooghe, had also a fertile imagination and rare facility of execution, but his needle served his intellect badly, it was heavy and monotonous, so that his etchings are dull and without character. James Houbraken strove in vain, during a great part of the eighteenth century, to revive the beautiful style of etchings brought to so high a pitch by Cornelius Visscher and his pupils. His drawing is incorrect, and he only showed great skill in handling the graver. In addition to his numerous portraits he produced some clever engravings after C. Troost which represent scenes of local interest.

In the year 1780, the date of the death of Houbraken, the history of engraving in Holland must end. If we pursued our inquiry further we should have to name a number of inferior artists, and this, we think, would lead to confusion and be unjust to those who really advanced their art, and deserve to be remembered.

We have named Rembrandt as the inaugurator of the Dutch school, and Peter Paul Rubens takes the same position in Flanders. We do not mean to ignore numerous painters who preceded him and took lessons of Van Eyck and Memling; but we are considering the history of engraving, not of painting, and we think

we may justly assert that a true school was not founded in Flanders until Rubens gave engravers an aim, and aroused their ambition by his works. The art could not, of course, spring into fame and power at once, and before it made its name known many inferior engravers were at work. The engravings of Wierix are executed with talent, still they do not betoken any great knowledge, unless we except a few portraits which are finished with great beauty and delicacy. The Sadelers made up for want of skill by great fertility of imagination. Ad. Collaert devoted himself to allegory and sacred subjects; the compositions of Martin de Vos and Stradan were his chief favourites. Finally, Cornelius, Theodore, and Philip Galle excelled the engravers we have named; their early works show great power, but their genius was not fully developed until they came under the influence of Rubens, to whom was reserved the honour of founding the national Flemish school of engraving.

Peter Paul Rubens was born at Siegen, in May, 1577; he spent his early years there, and then went to Cologne for a time; he did not reside at Antwerp with his mother until the year 1588, after the death of his father. When settled in Antwerp, the first care of Maria Pypeling, Rubens' mother, was to obtain a good education for her son. His studies over, Rubens entered the service of the widow of the Count of Lalaing, Margaret of Ligne, as a page. He did not long remain in this, to him, uncongenial position, but

obtained his mother's permission to adopt the profession of an artist, for which he had long shown a great inclination. His first master was Tobias Verhaegt, a painter almost unknown now; he did not remain with him long, but before going to the studio of his true master, Otto Venius, to complete his studies, he was for a time under Adrian Van der Noort. After four years with Venius, Rubens determined to go to Italy. He left Antwerp on the 9th of May, 1600, and visited successively Venice, Mantua, Rome, Genoa, and Milan. He lived by preference at Venice, and during a long stay there, enthusiastically copied paintings by Paul Veronese, Titian, and Tintoretto. It was in Venice, too, that he made friends with a gay young officer of good family, who took him to the court of the Duke of Mantua, Vincenzo da Gonzaga. The duke, who was devoted to literature and the fine arts, liked to be surrounded by the chief authors and painters of the day; he retained the Flemish artist near him, and entrusted him with the execution of several works. Better still, he discovered that Rubens had the qualities of a courtier as well as those of a great painter, and that he might be more useful than many of those who studied diplomacy as a profession. He was so convinced of this, that when he wished to send some splendid presents to Philip III., king of Spain, he chose Rubens as his ambassador. The painter having proved himself worthy of the confidence reposed in him, received a great reward on his return;

the duke gave him permission to go to Rome to study the masterpieces of which the Papal city is full. Rubens lingered some time in Italy, and was thinking of going to France, when sudden tidings reached him at Milan which abruptly ended his wanderings; his mother was seriously ill and longed to embrace her son before her death. Rubens set out without delay, but his haste availed him nothing, his mother died whilst he was still far from Antwerp. Overcome with grief, he took refuge in the convent of St. Michael, where she was buried, and devoted the leisure hours of this voluntary seclusion to raising a tomb in his mother's honour, the designs for which he supplied himself. He composed the epitaph also, and placed a picture he had painted at Rome beneath the Mausoleum. When the first sharpness of grief had passed away, Rubens returned to society, and took up his abode in Antwerp, where he had a house built which he embellished with works of art of every description. He now devoted himself entirely to work, and many long years of study; but little occurred worthy of notice. On the 13th of October, 1609, he married Isabella Brandt; in 1620 he went to Paris to paint the Luxembourg Gallery by order of Maria de Medicis. He remained some time in Paris and then returned to Antwerp, which he did not again leave until the death of his wife, when, being unable to continue his art by grief, he accepted a mission entrusted to him by the Archduke Albert and the

Archduchess Isabella. The rest of Rubens' existence was devoted rather to politics than art. He was sent to Spain and England to negotiate peace between the two countries which had been at war with one another for many years. He had occasion to use his brush in these successive missions, as he often explained the object of his mission while taking the portraits of the monarchs to whom he was accredited. He has left many glorious traces of his visit both at Madrid and London. In November 1630, he married again. His second wife was his niece, Helen Fourment, by whom he had five children. Rubens died at Antwerp of an attack of gout on the 30th of May, 1640. His funeral was celebrated with very great pomp. In him Flanders not only lost her greatest painter but one of her greatest men.

Rubens' influence upon engraving was most decided. Not only were his paintings excellent models for the artists who engraved them, but he superintended their works himself, and touched them up with great skill, never allowing a print to be published without his approbation. It is to this constant vigilance, to this self-respect, so to speak, that Rubens owes his immense reputation. Engravings of his works are widely distributed, and give an excellent idea of the painter's genius to those who have not seen the originals. It is worthy of remark, that Rubens' paintings, famous as they are for their life and power, for their harmony of tone and vividness of colouring, offered exceptional

difficulties to engravers, who have only two colours, black ink and white paper, at their command; but all difficulties were surmounted by the great master's untiring supervision; and engravers, who confined themselves to the burin, brought out copies in all respects worthy of the originals. We are assured that Rubens himself executed some engravings; but we find it difficult to believe that the plates signed, '*Rubens fecit*' '*invenit*' or '*excudit*,' were really by him. Only one engraving, 'St. Catherine,' can, we think, be attributed to him with any justice. It has qualities of the first order, although the execution is not very superior. When we have studied the works of those who generally copied Rubens on copper, we shall scarcely regret that he did not leave more of his own engravings.

The most skilful of the artists formed in Rubens' school was Schelte of Bolswert, who was born at Bolswert, in Friesland, about 1586. With his brother, Boethius of Bolswert, an artist of less talent and inferior reputation, he came to study engraving at Antwerp, where he was a fellow-pupil of Paul Pontius. He was the first who tried to do more than coldly imitate a painting in engraving, he chose as models works full of life and vivid colouring, and tried to express these qualities in his work. He succeeded perfectly. He was a complete master of the process and obtained the most pleasing results by his skilfully disposed strokes. The white paper throws up high lights and

Fig. 13.—Saint Catherine. Engraving attributed to P. P. Rubens.

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the dark portions are admirably given by bold strokes ending in dots. In the works which Bolswert executed in the zenith of his powers there is no display of his own personal talent; he did not parade his skill as a line-engraver, his ambition was something higher; he aimed to render as faithfully as possible, by a process which could not call in the aid of colour, the works of his contemporaries. He naturally preferred Rubens' paintings, for that master was at the head of his school; but he was not therefore indifferent to good works by Rubens' pupils. His engravings of 'The Musicians,' after Jordaens, and the 'Drunken Silenus,' after Anthony Vandyck, may rank with his magnificent copies of 'The Assumption,' 'The Miraculous Draught of Fishes,' and 'The Resurrection.'

Paul Pontius, who worked side by side with Schelte of Bolswert, and shared with him the friendship of Rubens, was almost equally gifted, and reproduced the master's works as successfully. His engraving was plastic and correct; he rendered the colour and consistency of flesh and the flowing folds of drapery with equal power. Paul Pontius carried the science of chiaroscuro further than any engraver of Rubens' school, and his constant endeavour to give the luminous appearance of paintings in his plates saved him from undue striving after brilliant execution.

He engraved many of Rubens' pictures; and 'The Feast of Pentecost,' 'The Assumption,' 'Susannah at the Bath,' 'The Presentation in the Temple,' and

others, are by no means inferior to Bolswert's best plates ; they have the same knowledge of design and execution, the same conscientious drawing, which neither excludes originality nor fetters the individual imagination. One of the best known and most famous of Paul Pontius' engravings is after the celebrated picture by Jordaens in the Museum of the Louvre, entitled 'Le Roi Boit,' or 'Le Fête du Roi.' The spirited engraving gives the somewhat coarse colouring of the picture and the life-like expression of the figures with surprising felicity.

The style of Lucas Vorsterman differs somewhat from that of the preceding artists. His manner of engraving is not so spirited, but it is equally clever ; he reproduced Rubens' pictures by means of the combination of many different kinds of work. By varied lines he appropriately rendered the different parts of a picture ; curved and facile strokes give the outlines of the limbs, and draperies are produced by more or less condensed lines, according to the strength of the light upon them. 'Susannah and the Elders,' 'The Adoration of the Shepherds,' and several 'Holy Families,' show the great genius of Vorsterman, and prove him to have been one of Rubens' most faithful interpreters. His ambition was not contented with producing Rubens' works with fidelity, and therefore he went to England, where he spent eight years in copying paintings of another and different style. Whether he turned to Raphael, to Annibale Carracci, or Caravaggio, he

could not shake off the influence of Rubens. Under his graver, Raphael's outlines lost their exquisite purity and grace, and the figures acquired an appearance of good living of which the great Italian master certainly never dreamt. Vorsterman could never shake off the style of the naturalistic school in which he had been reared; he could not realise the majestic and noble ideal of these masters. He was more at ease with a canvas by Michaelangelo of Caravaggio, 'The Virgin Adored by Two Pilgrims,' the sober colouring of which he faithfully rendered; but it was a fellow-countryman of his, Anthony Vandyck, who inspired the best engravings he produced in England.

Peter de Jode, the younger, also belongs to the school of Rubens. He was born at Antwerp in 1606. He studied and worked for a long time with Peter de Jode, the elder; and in his early works, which were clumsy and inexperienced, he reproduced his father's style. It is not easy to distinguish his first engravings from those of the elder Jode. Peter, the younger, showed no original power until he ceased to work for the publisher Bonenfant, with whom his father had placed him. He then turned to paintings by Rubens, Vandyck, and Jordaens. In his engravings after these masters he shows himself a worthy rival of Bolswert, Paul Pontius, and Lucas Vorsterman. His touch is easy yet powerful, he delights in rich combinations, and is extremely successful in rendering pictures full of colour on copper. 'The Marriage of

St. Catherine,' 'The Three Graces,' after Rubens, 'St. Augustine,' after Vandyck, and 'The Miracle of St. Martin of Tours,' after Jordaens, place Peter de Jode, the younger, amongst the best engravers of the Flemish school.

The school which Rubens raised and directed includes many other artists. We have spoken of the most illustrious; but there are some amongst the second-rate artists of the same time who occasionally most successfully imitated their master. Amongst them was Peter Soutman. Dutch by birth, he crossed the Scheldt, and came to Antwerp to study under Rubens. He used etching largely, and was chiefly skilful in rendering the delicate figures in his master's works. We will enumerate a few others: Hans Withdœck, who heightened his engravings with tints, and by this method made them look like chiaroscuro on copper; Cornelius Galle, who engraved 'Judith and Holofernes' somewhat clumsily; Andrew Stock, a Dutchman established at Antwerp, whose engraving of the 'Sacrifice of Abraham' is not equal to the original; Peter Van Sompel, a pupil of Peter Soutman, and an expert designer, who, though superior to the others, never mastered the difficulties of representing colour; Michael Natalis, who joined the studio of Cornelius Bloemaert at Rome, where he acquired a frigid and inharmonious style of engraving, which he could not shake off, even when working at paintings by Rubens; James Matham, a pupil of

Goltzius, who could not free himself from his master's mannerism, and whose engravings, with all their profound knowledge of art, failed to give the colouring or symmetry of Rubens' works; Alexander Voet, who drew incorrectly, but, being a pupil of Paul Pontius, excelled in colouring, and whose engravings after Rubens ('Judith and Holofernes' amongst others) give a fair notion of the originals, although the bold and masterly drawing is wanting. To conclude this list, Christopher Jegher, a German wood-engraver, left his country to establish himself in Flanders. His engravings were noticed by Rubens, who wished to have some of his own works reproduced by this process. The great master himself drew some designs on wood, and the engraver had only to follow scrupulously his outlines and hatchings. The engravings thus executed by Jegher are true fac-similes of Rubens' designs. Sometimes, like the Italians, Jegher imitated several tints by means of successive plates, the tinting thus rounding off the outlines; and to this day these *camaïeux*, as they are called, give us with a valuable exactitude copies of the Flemish painter's designs.

The artists who took lessons from Rubens did not, however, confine themselves exclusively to his paintings. We have already spoken of engravings after Jordaens, Seghers, and Vandyck, by followers of Rubens. Works of this kind are very numerous; and Anthony Vandyck's paintings were especially admired and patronised by engravers.

When considered apart from other painters, Anthony Vandyck is a master of the first order; his figures are all unrivalled in distinguished character, delicacy and elegance, but, as compared with Peter Paul Rubens, he can only take the second place. This is but just; he came after Rubens, and profited by his example, neither had he the same wonderful creative power as his master. In his portraits, however, Vandyck is not inferior to Rubens; he looks at nature from a different point of view, caring, it is true, more for character than grandeur, but then, his works have greater interest for us than those of his master. Let us explain. He was not content merely to look over engravings after his works by Bolswert, Paul Pontius, or Vorsterman, or to superintend engravers; he used the tools himself, and has left brilliant proofs of his skill in this kind of work. His compositions are not his best works: 'Christ Crowned with Thorns,' and 'Titian and his Mistress,' do not show much talent, his work is laboured, he covered his paper too closely in copying flesh; but he made up for this in the eighteen portraits which he most delicately and skilfully engraved with the needle. They are of artists and amateurs, friends of the painter. The features are lifelike and wear their best expression. Vandyck was more successful than any earlier painter in seizing a likeness. After a few impressions had been taken of the portraits which this great master himself drew on copper, they were retouched and completed with

Fig. 14.—Portrait of Snyders, an etching, by ANT. VANDYCK.

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the graver by professional engravers; a uniformity was thus given which fitted them to be included in the series of 'Icones Pictorum,' published successively by Giles Hendricx and Martin Van den Enden. Engraved by L. Vorsterman, Bolswert, Paul Pontius, Peter de Jode, and others, this magnificent series does justice to the genius of Vandyck. There are a hundred personages, all drawn with surprising correctness, who appear to be living, thinking, moving beings; their attitudes are natural and simple, whether pensive or animated, the features reflect the intelligence of the sitter, and the engravers of these portraits have faithfully rendered the master's work. They gave the spirit, the grace, and even the colouring of the originals, although they used the graver, which is not so facile an instrument as the needle.

The example set by Vandyck was followed by many of his contemporaries, and other Flemish painters largely employed etching. They deserve mention, although their talent did not equal Vandyck's. Cornelius Schut, a pupil of Rubens, and the most diligent of these engravers, had not very refined taste. He drew heavily, his figures are clumsy and vulgar, his Madonnas and heathen deities are very much alike. The same head surmounts the bust of the Virgin and that of Ceres; it is not easy to distinguish one from the other. It is the delicate work with the needle which justifies the fame of Cornelius Schut's engravings; he wanted only rather more taste to have

produced valuable works. Francis Van den Wyngaerde, who traded in engravings at Antwerp, and signed a number of good plates of that school, with *exc.* (*excudit*) after his name, used the needle also. His manner is not easy to define, for he tried every style, and fell short of his models in all. His 'Holy Family,' after Cornelius Schut, is badly drawn and coldly engraved. The same faults are seen in a 'Flight into Egypt,' after John Thomas, a Flemish painter who is now scarcely known, but who succeeded better with etching than most of his contemporaries. Van den Wyngaerde, who used a very fine needle, engraved several battles, which have the one fault of being too confused. He shows real skill in 'Hercules and the Nemæan Lion,' after Rubens, and the 'Portrait of Lucas Vorsterman,' after J. Livens; his style, although still rather clumsy, faithfully renders the manner of these masters. Theodore Van Thulden studied with Rubens, and accompanied his master to Paris when he went to decorate the gallery of Luxembourg. He worked with Rubens at many of his pictures, and left several works at Paris, amongst others, the paintings which filled the choir of the 'Eglise des Mathurins,' since destroyed. These pictures represent many episodes in the life of St. John of Matha; Van Thulden reproduced them himself, and these engravings give a better notion of his talent than those of the 'History of Ulysses,' after pictures at Fontainbleau by Nicolo dell' Abbate, which were

designed by Primaticcio. We think that these engravings have only one good point, they are reproductions of compositions which are now lost, but they have none of the characteristic taste of the Italian master. William Panneels, a painter and engraver of Antwerp, also took lessons of Rubens. He engraved so many of his master's works, that he must evidently have admired Rubens extremely; but his talent did not equal his admiration, and his engravings fell far short of the powerful originals. With an idea of showing his great knowledge of chiaroscuro, he made the most abrupt changes from deep black to clear white; his engravings, in consequence, were harsh and gloomy, unlike his earlier works, which were either bathed in soft light, or lit up with splendour.

The Flemish school of engraving declined and finally became extinct, in the hands of these second-rate artists. It attained its highest distinction under Rubens, and disappeared almost entirely in the eighteenth century; the works produced at that period scarcely merit notice. The constant wars which desolated Flanders were little calculated to encourage artists; they dispersed abroad, some established themselves in France, where art was at its greatest height; and when we treat of the French artists, we shall meet with many engravers from Antwerp. They largely influenced the progress of art in France, and we must carefully note the novelties introduced by foreign masters into that country.

CHAPTER V.

ENGRAVING IN GERMANY.

Early Engravers on Wood.—Maximilian's Engravers.—Engraving on Metal.—The Master of 1466, Martin Schöngauer and Albert Dürer.

IT would be useless to resume the discussion as to Germany's right to be considered the first inventor of engraving. Scholars of high position give the best reasons for so many diverse opinions that the question is further from settlement than ever. We will therefore pass it by and confine our attention to works of excellence without caring whether they were of the earliest date or not. We repeat that we consider the first specimen of engraving—the 'Speculum Humanæ Salvationis' for instance—to be the work of some carver of images of the Low Countries; German historians refuse to give this credit to others, although they will probably agree with us when we say that no wood engravers were equal to the German masters of the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries.

The 'St. Christopher' of 1423 is a good starting point for every discussion; we shall not do more than glance at it or at the many early anonymous woodcuts; passing on to the second half of the fifteenth century before we find real talent in Germany or elsewhere. Engravings produced before 1450 were mere copies of little talent. We have not forgotten that the 'Biblia Pauperum' has been attributed with some justice to German artists, and that bibliographers mention primers which were published, and probably, also, composed in Germany; but, nevertheless, no true artist was born until 1460. Until then wood-engraving, of which we are at the present moment speaking, was under the universal influence of the school of Bruges, and a distinctive German style was scarcely recognisable. Pfister is for us the earliest German wood-engraver. He learnt the trade of a printer and engraver from Gutenberg, established himself at Bamberg about 1458, and, out of his private resources, published a number of works mentioned by M. Léon de Laborde in his important work, 'Les Débuts de l'Imprimerie à Mayence et à Bamberg.' These engravings in early printed works are decidedly coarse and of little talent; but then they are entirely free from foreign influence, and are interesting to us because they decide the origin of wood-engraving at least to have been German.

Although xylography was quite a new art in Germany and elsewhere in the fifteenth century, an immense number of woodcuts were published at this

period both separately and in printed books. This fertility of production had its disadvantages; the gifted artists who supplied the designs did not watch their engravers enough, and the work produced did not do justice to the originals. Ugliness and deformity were carried to extremes by these early engravers; their sole merit indeed was their skill in carving wood. The 'Bible' of Koburger contains eighty-six cuts of better execution than most of the early engravings; they are not now thought much of, although some were honoured by being copied for Holbein's Bible, and Albert Dürer borrowed from them for his apocalyptic designs. In the stunted figures and the stiff heavy folds of drapery we recognise productions of the German school; but we are not, therefore, justified in considering all these engravings to be by Michael Wolgemuth and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff, to whom they are attributed by the printer, Koburger, in his preface. Their styles are too diverse and their merits too unequal to stamp them as the work of two artists only. Wolgemuth and Pleydenwurff may have superintended them, or even have executed some of the more important plates, but many are unworthy in every respect of artists whose other works have obtained for their authors something closely resembling celebrity.

Michael Wolgemuth was Albert Dürer's master, and the glory of the pupil is reflected on the teacher. In these days of universal scepticism, people are unwilling to consider Albert Dürer a wood-engraver; they

attribute to artists working under his supervision the splendid engravings of the 'Apocalypse,' and those of the 'Life of the Virgin,' and the greater number are said to be by Jeremiah Resch, a wood-carver and medallist. Such, at least, is the opinion of a historian of Nuremberg. We must needs bow to the decision of a man whose knowledge cannot be denied; but we hardly like to exclude these masterly engravings from the list of Albert Dürer's works. If he did not himself engrave the plates he must have watched over the artists to whom he entrusted them with untiring solicitude, for they never worked better than when interpreting the designs of Germany's greatest painter.

Lucas Cranach, born in Saxony about the same time as Albert Dürer, was not uninfluenced by the example of his contemporary. His style, however, is very different; he cared less for beauty and finish than the master of Nuremberg. The engravers he employed—for it is very doubtful whether he himself used the graving tool—worked in a more picturesque though less correct style than those who followed Dürer, and the beauty of the designs at which they worked were also of a less exalted type. Lucas Cranach was an intimate friend of Luther, and enthusiastically adopted the principles of the Reformation. He painted portraits of Luther and his wife, of Melancthon, and Frederick the Wise; he placed his talent at the service of the new religion, and illustrated with engravings the outspoken pamphlets of the Reformer.

In his works we meet with many attacks on the papacy. He was full of zeal for the new religion, and his crude way of treating Biblical subjects proves how prejudiced he was, and that art was not his only occupation. The wood-engravers who reproduced his designs aimed at an exact copy, they avoided cross-hatchings, and simplified their work as much as possible; indeed they sacrificed most unselfishly their own originality to that of their master.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century a new impulse was given to wood-engraving. The Emperor Maximilian entrusted to the best artists of Germany four works which were to immortalise his glory, and in the composition of which he himself took a part. 'The Wise King' ('Der Weisse Kœnig') contains a number of woodcuts designed by Hans Burgmair, and engraved by several artists of different ability. The 'Theuerdanck,' a moral and allegorical poem by the Emperor Maximilian and his secretary, Melchior Pfintzing, is illustrated by engravings, the designs of which are attributed to Hans Schauflein. The most important of these works, and that which most contributed to the sovereign's glory, was almost entirely confided to Hans Burgmair, who proved himself worthy of his great commission. To him we are also indebted for the male and female 'Saints of the Imperial Family,' which are equal in beauty and importance to the engravings mentioned above. The death of Maximilian interrupted these noble works,

various difficulties prevented their immediate publication, and for many years only rare specimens were known of the 'Triumph of Maximilian,' and of the 'Saints of the Imperial Family.' Later, a lucky accident led to the discovery of the original blocks, which had happily not been entirely destroyed by worms. This discovery was followed by another. At the back of the original engravings the names of the engravers were found. This was most fortunate. Thanks to these inscriptions, we can name the skilful artists who interpreted the designs of the masters employed by Maximilian. They were Jeremiah Resch, Jan of Bonn, Cornelius Liefrinck, Wilhelm Liefrinck, Alexis Lindt, Josse of Negker, Vincent Pfarkecher, James Rupp, Jan Taberith, Hans Franck, and Saint-German. These well-authenticated names of engravers of the sixteenth century are of assistance even now in the deciphering of monograms, and they throw a light on the eventful history of the origin of engraving in Germany.

Hans Baldung Grün was born in Swabia in 1475, and died at Strasburg in 1552. He worked under Albert Dürer. Jackson tells us, in his 'Treatise on Wood-Engraving,' that the pupil's reverence for his master was so great that he preserved a lock of Dürer's hair as a precious relic all his life. This respect was still more evident in the designs he caused to be engraved. His style much resembled Dürer's, but it was exaggerated; and Grün seems to have had

an unfortunate affection for ugliness when left to his own devices; he invented stunted figures, grinning heads, and unnatural movements, which were only too literally rendered by his engravers. Baldung Grün was a painter and a designer, but his pictures are not now highly valued, although his master thought well enough of them to offer one to Joachim Patenier. They are confounded at present amongst the innumerable anonymous paintings brought to light by the researches of enthusiasts.

Hans Ulrich Vaechtlein, also known by the name of the 'Master of the Crossed Staves,' or of the 'Pilgrim,' worked about the same time as Baldung Grün. The date of his birth is unknown, but M. Lœdel, who has devoted much study to this artist, thinks his life was spent at Strasburg. A skilful and well-improved artist, he is in Germany considered the inventor of engraving *en camaïeu.* His valuable and rare plates are remarkable for the skill of their execution, and for an exactness of design which is less exclusively Teutonic in style than that of most of his contemporaries. Eleven of his works are known which show that he was not indifferent to Albert Dürer's works, but they are famous rather for cleverness of style than for inventive power.

We have not nearly exhausted the list of German wood-engravers. In addition to anonymous artists, and those known only by their monograms, there are many who merit notice. It is true that among those

we are about to name, Jost Amman, Henry Aldegrever, Albrecht Altdorfer, Hans Sebald Beham, Virgilius Solis, or Daniel Hoffper did more as copper-plate than as wood engravers, and, as we shall have to allude to them later, we will now close our notice of German wood-engravers. We must, however, pause for one moment at Bâle, where a great master was born, and where also numerous very clever wood-engravers exercised their craft.

Urs Graf, who worked at the beginning of the sixteenth century, died at Bâle in 1530. He designed a great number of vignettes for wood-engravers which were of no great imagination or refinement. He was slightly influenced by Martin Schöngauer, whose school he attended for a time, but he did not care enough for grandeur of style, and always copied that master's feeblest works. He is almost the only known artist of the numbers who were born at Bâle and published their works in that city, but he took no part in the revival of art which was going on under his eyes, and which was, so to speak, completed by Hans Holbein the younger.

It is generally believed that Hans Holbein was born at Bâle about 1498. He was fortunate enough to have a wood-engraver beside him who reproduced almost all his works, and spread abroad his fame. Both as a painter and designer Holbein has left a great name. For a long time the numerous engravings on title-pages, head-lines, and tail-pieces in books printed

at Bâle were supposed to have been designed and engraved by Hans Holbein. A monogram of 'H. L.' somewhat puzzled the critics, but it would have been passed over had not an unexpected circumstance revealed to the clear-sighted an alphabet generally attributed to Holbein, with this remark accompanying it: 'Hans Lutzelburger, Formschneider, genant Franck,' which gave the honour which was his due to Hans Lutzelburger, the real author. Although this artist succeeded better with Holbein's designs than any others, he did not confine himself to them. He was called by the Abbé Zani "the prince of wood-engravers." Mariette, so good a judge of engraving, says, in his manuscript notes, that it is impossible to admire sufficiently the delicacy of his work and the fineness and spirit of his touch. "I think," he says, "that Holbein's designs, which were not too well finished, needed the completeness given to them by this artist, who deserves the esteem in which he is held by the publisher of Lyons. His name, which deserves to be transmitted to posterity, remains in oblivion, but his initials, H. L., are seen on the lower part of a bed on which reclines a young woman at the point of death." This name, unknown to the scholar Mariette, is no longer a mystery. Hans Lutzelburger is certainly the author of the 'Dance of Death' (1538), and of 'The Old and New Testament' ('Icones Historiarum Veteris Testamenti'; Lyons; Jean Frellon; 1547). His powerful and facile graver rendered these

compositions by Holbein with extreme delicacy. They are small if the size be measured, but large and grand in conception and thought. Certain of his subjects which might be contained within the surface of a die, if executed on a large scale, would lose nothing of their merit, so well balanced is the general composi-

Fig. 15. Engraved from Holbein's Dance of Death, by H. LUTZELBURGER.

tion, so careful and accurate the design of the figures. The talent of Lutzelburger was shown in the power with which he interpreted the master's designs on wood in a very limited space by means of the skilful disposition of his strokes. Many other artists reproduced Holbein's works, but none whose works we have

seen, with the success of Lutzelburger; their style is heavy and exaggerated, and they missed the power and life of the master's compositions.

Engraving on Metal.—If, since the Abbé Zani's discovery, Germany's pretensions to the invention of engraving on metal have been overthrown, we must not deny the part the Germans took in the early history of this art because we refuse to consider them its inventors. About the same time that great works of art appeared at Florence, in 1452, a number of engravings were published on the other side of the Rhine. Many of the anonymous plates brought out by the German school appear, by the roughness of the drawing and imperfectness of execution, to be of a very ancient date. After examining these specimens of an art in its infancy we do not hesitate to assert, though we can give no formal reasons, that the means of taking impressions on paper from engraved metal was discovered simultaneously in Italy and Germany. Italy, as having produced the first work of genius by means of Maso Finiguerra, must take the precedence; but Germany followed closely in her steps, and soon gave birth to an artist of great talent, whose name, alas, is unknown. He is generally called the "Master of 1466." Amongst the many anonymous artists who preceded this engraver, M. Duchesne considers the 'Master of the Streamers' to be the author of a few plates which, though roughly drawn, are engraved in a peculiar manner, and much sought for on account of

Fig. 16.—Samson and the Lion. Engraving of the MASTER of 1466.

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their archaic style. The figures in this unknown artist's works are covered with imperceptible strokes which appear to have been obtained with a pointed instrument, and not with a cutting one. The metal must have been very soft; it is rather fretted than hollowed out. It does not appear to have been printed from; indeed, neither the metal nor the small quantity of ink spread upon it could have borne much pressure. There is one important fact in favour of our opinion that impressions were obtained by friction; there are no marks made by the plate in any part of these engravings, and we have seen some of the proofs by this anonymous artist which are in a sufficiently perfect condition to have shown the marks of the edges of the metal had they undergone much pressure. From this we may conclude that the 'Master of the Streamers' (so named on account of the ribbons covered with legends on all his figures) did not know all the resources of his art, and may, therefore, be considered one of the earliest engravers of the German school.

Another anonymous artist whose engravings, signed E. S., with the date 1466 and 1467, are very numerous, is justly called a Master. He was wonderfully expert with the graver, and although the drawing of his varied and well-conceived compositions is not always correct, it is easy and expressive. 'The Adoration of the Magi' forcibly reminds us of one of the justly admired miniatures of the preceding century.

The "Master of 1466" made the limbs of his figures too attenuated and thin, but when he had to design a piece of jewelry, a paten, or a branch of ornamental foliage, he was in his element and produced tasteful and graceful compositions. He was a thoroughly Gothic artist—his ideal of beauty was different from ours, different from that of the early Italians; with him grandeur of form and design were secondary to justice of expression and simplicity of feeling. In this he resembled the extraordinary artists too long depreciated, who built Strasburg Cathedral, and other superb monuments of the Middle Ages. Like them, he understood the disposition of ornament, and he treated the human figure with a simplicity not without majesty. The heads, it is true, are too large, the hands and feet too small, the folds of drapery too irregular, recalling the wood carvings of his predecessors; but art requires something more than a literal representation of reality, she requires to give expression to an idea, to a sentiment, and from this point of view the "Master of 1466" deserves all praise, for he was the first German engraver who devoted his talent to rendering feeling and expression.

Martin Schöngauer almost immediately followed the "Master of 1466." He may be considered the father of the German school, so great was his influence over it. He is now justly famous; but after being honoured in his own age to such an extent, that unscrupulous publishers did not hesitate to place his name

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THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

From the Engraving by Martin Schöngauer.

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under works by others to enhance their value in the eyes of inexperienced amateurs. He was classed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with all his contemporaries, amongst those Gothic artists in whom even well-informed historians recognised no talent. To this unfortunate injustice is due the loss of many paintings, which, not being sought for, as their merits deserved, were damaged or destroyed. And when at last modern Criticism, with better judgment, turned to these leading masters, she was in a dilemma, for the long despised authentic specimens of early art, and important documents relating to their authors, had disappeared ; so that we do not even know when and where Martin Schöngauer was born.

Aided by some signed and dated works, we think we may consider 1420 about the time of his birth. His family, natives of Strasburg, say he was born there ; some authors, finding traces of his living at Ulm, call that his birthplace ; but the greater number agree in saying that he first saw the light at Colmar. He certainly lived there for a long time, and produced many paintings in the latter town ; and he died on the day of the Purification, 1488, as proved by the certificate of burial in the registers of the parish of St. Martin of Colmar, a fac-simile of which has been recently published. Although we cannot write the biography of Martin Schöngauer, his authentic engravings enable us justly to appreciate his genius. He evidently knew and was influenced by the engrav-

ings of the "Master of 1466," but he was a more skilful designer, and although the limbs of many of his figures are out of proportion, some of the extremities being too small, and in others enormous feet sup-

Fig. 17.—The Infant Jesus. Engraved by MARTIN SCHÖNGAUER.

porting small bodies, he invented and engraved some very different compositions. One justly celebrated engraving, 'The Bearing of the Cross,' was honoured by Raphael's notice, and considered worthy of study by him. 'The Temptation of St. Anthony,' copied,

according to an old tradition, by Michael Angelo, and 'The Conversion of St. Paul,' are works unrivalled by any of the German school. Besides these justly famous engravings, Martin Schöngauer produced several excellent compositions. The face of the Virgin in his 'Annunciation,' a work of small dimensions, wears a sweet and tender expression which is almost beautiful, and there is a grace about the head of the celestial messenger, reminding us of the Milanese school. In the 'Flight into Egypt,' Martin Schöngauer's best work, as we think, the Virgin clasping the divine infant in her arms, is passing, riding on an ass, beneath a palm-tree covered with angels, and St. Joseph is gathering some dates from the tree. This ingenious composition is remarkable for the evident joy with which the Virgin embraces her Son, rescued from the wrath of Herod and adored by angels. It was in such touching subjects that all the Gothic artists excelled. They had faith, and their faith determined, enlightened, and ennobled their ambition. How many works bear charming witness to this! We might name many engravings by Schöngauer, as remarkable for feeling as for successful execution: 'The Death of the Virgin,' 'The Wise and Foolish Virgins,' 'The Symbols of the Four Evangelists,' 'Jesus Christ crowning the Virgin,' and others, are works of high excellence. In them all the artist's power of invention, his knowledge of drawing and skill in engraving, are clearly manifested.

But the great German artist did not devote himself entirely to exalted subjects, he also engraved some homely scenes, such as the 'Departure for the Market,' known up to the 17th century as the 'Uylenspiegel,' because it was like an engraving of that name by Lucas of Leyden, and 'The Peasants' playing or wrestling together. He gave brilliant proof also of his powers as an inventor, and engraver in design for jewelry or ornaments. It is the glory of Schöngauer, that surrounded as he was by artists absorbed in their love of literal truth, he was able, in his artistic compositions, to realize an ideal beauty of a noble and elevated order. His right to the title of "Master of German Art" is indisputable. His works were admired by his successors, and influenced them strongly even when they were not actually copying them.

We consider that the artists who came after Martin Schöngauer enjoy greater renown than they deserve. Albert Glockenton has merely coarsely and inadequately reproduced the master's engravings, robbing them of their exquisite simplicity and their graceful charm. He also executed a few plates from designs of his own, but they are without originality, and although the drawing is correct the engraving is always harsh. Israel Van Mecken owes his fame rather to the quantity than the quality of the engravings bearing his name. We are glad to suppose that the author of these plates was as much a print-seller as an artist. The style of more than one of these engravings is

earlier than its execution, and perhaps the plates being dimmed by the first printings, were retouched in Mecken's studio, and there received the name they bear.

All the engravings which were at all celebrated in Van Mecken's time, were copied in his studio. The 'Paten' of the "Master of 1466," the 'Bearing of the Cross, and the 'St. Anthony,' by Martin Schöngauer, 'The Three Graces,' by Albert Dürer, served as models to his pupils; their copies, however, were so rough as to be of little value, they reproduced neither the masterly boldness of the drawing, nor the skill of the original engravings. In default of artistic power, we own, however, that some of the rarer works produced in Van Mecken's studio, are valuable on account of the interesting information they contain on the habits of life, and the costumes of that period. Van Mecken was far more successful with home scenes than when copying engravings by great masters. He interpreted nature and copied living figures with undeniable talent, and one well-known engraving, 'The Concert,' shows what he could do in this secondary style.

Franz Van Bocholt, another copyist of Schöngauer, spent his life in inventing and engraving works which, though they resembled, did not equal the compositions of the master he imitated. He shows real genius in the 'Virgin at the Foot of the Cross,' which is his best work. The Virgin's face is full of genuine suffering, and the draperies are arranged with fair enough

taste. An artist called Mair, who signed his works in full, appears to have followed Israel Van Mecken rather than Martin Schöngauer. The engravings we know signed by him are of domestic scenes and costumes, more valuable to the historian than to the artist. The figures, in the dress of the fifteenth century, are poor, and the bad drawing, partly disguised by the draperies, is too evident in those parts which are uncovered. Martin Zagel also professed great admiration for Van Mecken. He had an incredible love of ugliness, and produced a number of harsh and inferior engravings, which were not all even original.

We do not meet with another true master in Germany until the end of the fifteenth century. At that time, however, an artist of Nuremberg arose whose influence nearly equalled that of Schöngauer and whose fame is greater. Albert Dürer was the third of eighteen children. His father established himself as a goldsmith at Nuremberg in 1455; he could not afford to give his son a thorough education, but he tried to give him the love of work. Albert Dürer learnt his father's trade and quickly surpassed his teachers. But as soon as he was in a position to study painting he left the goldsmith with whom he had been working, and entered the studio of Michael Wolgemuth, whose fame had already spread through Germany. Anthony Koberger, the celebrated printer, and Albert Dürer's godfather, probably knew of this intention, for he published his 'Chronicles of Nurem-

berg' about this time, and entrusted the supervision of the engravings for this book to Wolgemuth. Naturally, young Dürer was readily and kindly received by his godfather's colleague, and when he had served his apprenticeship he visited in succession the Low Countries and the north of Italy. The route he followed is unknown, and we could not speak positively about this trip, but for the evident proofs of his influence in works of the schools of northern Italy and Flanders from the beginning of the sixteenth century.

In 1494 Albert Dürer was summoned back to Nuremberg by his father, who had arranged a marriage for him with Agnes Frey, the daughter of a mechanic of the town. Report says, perhaps with exaggeration, that this was not a happy marriage. There was certainly incompatibility of temper between Albert Dürer and his wife. He was open-hearted and generous, she was cold, selfish, and disagreeable. It was impossible for two such uncongenial dispositions to be happy together, and, therefore, on the death of his father in 1502, after providing for his mother and his brothers, Hans and Andrew, Dürer left his native town and directed his steps towards Venice, where he was most cordially welcomed. He had scarcely arrived before he received an order for a painting for the 'Fondaco dei Tedeschi,' and Giovanni Bellini, anxious to know so famous an artist, sent for him and requested a picture, for which he was even willing to pay, a pleasing announcement to Dürer, who often

complains in his letters of the parsimony of the Venetians. This visit to Venice and his constant excursions to Bologna, formed the happiest time of his life. Young, courted, loaded with honours, alone, and free, he forgot for a time his petty domestic troubles.

At last, however, he was obliged to return to Nuremberg, and, fortunately, he undertook a long piece of work, which lessened his regret for Venice, with its bright skies and refining recreations. Nuremberg, too, appeared under a more favourable aspect to him now. His great genius, as is often the case, being first recognised by strangers, attracted the artists and men of note of the city to his house. His friendship and society were courted by the most distinguished men of the country. The Emperor Maximilian, a great patron of art, delighted to visit him and watch him at work. He showed the greatest regard for him, and wrote and thanked both him and his friend Perkheimer for the dedication of the beautiful series of wood engravings which Dürer drew for his 'Triumph.' After a long sojourn at Nuremberg, Albert Dürer was again seized with a longing to travel. He set out, but this time he took his wife and servant with him, and went into the Low Countries, where he had before been so heartily received. He has left a journal of this journey, in which he records day by day the honours rendered him, the visits he received and paid, the works he produced, his expenses, his impressions, and the facts which interested him.

Autotype

SAINT JEROME.

From the Engravnng by Albrecht Dürer.

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But on a certain Friday in 1521, the report spread to Antwerp that Luther had been taken prisoner, and put to death. Albert Dürer immediately wrote a true profession of faith, and in the form of a prayer published his admiration for the bold Reformer. This enthusiasm met with no approval in the Catholic Netherlands. The Archduchess Margaret, who had hitherto shown great favour to Dürer, became cold and reserved towards him.

The news of the artist's disgrace quickly spread, and the consequences to him were disastrous. People shunned him; those who had most admired his talent gradually changed their minds, and turned from him. Fully aware of the sudden alteration of opinion, Albert Dürer prepared to return to his native country, when Christian II., King of Denmark, who had just arrived at Antwerp, gave him an order for his portrait. The painter undertook it, and for a moment hoped for a return to favour, but at a dinner given by the king of Denmark at Brussels, at which the Archduchess Margaret and the Queen of Spain were present, the sovereigns avoided taking the slightest notice of him, and he felt that there was nothing left for him to do but to return to Nuremberg.

A few months after his return he lost his father-in-law, Hans Frey, and two years later his mother-in-law. Left alone with his wife, whose temper was still more soured by adversity, he endeavoured to find in work a peace which his home could not afford him. But

his powers were inferior to his will. On the 6th of April, 1528, he expired. His funeral was magnificent. An epitaph, composed by his friend Pirckheimer, and engraved on a brass plate, at first marked the spot in the cemetery of St. John at Nuremberg, where Albert Dürer reposes. Later, two inscriptions were substituted for it, one in Latin, placed there by the care of Sandrart, and the other in German verse. They are posterity's homage to the greatest artist Germany ever produced.

Albert Dürer owes his great reputation to his many paintings, and the knowledge of the human figure shown in them; but his engravings are perhaps even more admired than his paintings. Had Albert Dürer devoted himself entirely to painting, we should have had to admire him on trust; for his pictures, little valued at first on account of the Gothic style, so much disliked for two centuries, are now nearly all lost or destroyed, and those which remain would not have justified his contemporaries in calling him a master. Happily, his great genius and his habitual tendencies are seen in the engravings he signed and dated. Albert Dürer cared more for truth than beauty; he drew a great variety of objects with scrupulous fidelity, and instead of shrinking from human ugliness, he ventured to employ his marvellous skill in engraving an old woman with a swollen body, clumsy hands and feet, and a hideous face, to whom he gave the name of 'Nemesis;' she is now inappropriately called 'La

Fig. 18.—The Virgin and the Infant Jesus. Engraved by ALBERT DÜRER.

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Grande Fortune.' Dürer had not a true idea of beauty. He knew nothing of the works of antiquity, and had he studied them, it is probable he would have compromised his own originality without gaining anything in exchange. He was his own good model for his figures of Christ. The head of the Son of God, as interpreted by him, is manly and full of power; long hair shades a face betokening physical suffering and inward peace; thick eye-brows imply strength; the lines of the lofty forehead intellect, the deep-set eyes thought and sorrow. The Virgin is a good mother, watching her child with loving eyes, or pressing him tenderly to her breast; sometimes she is more. She is compassed about with majesty, and though her features are not strictly beautiful, her attitude and expression are full of true nobility. In the Madonna's flowing robes Albert Dürer shows his great skill in arranging draperies, and his command of all the mysteries of his art.

Albert Dürer is unrivalled as an engraver; he drew figures and moulded outlines with inimitable skill. With a very fine graver he hollowed out the metal with an infinite number of lines, which are admirably suited to his designs. His justly celebrated original engravings show no signs of fatigue, although they required such slow, careful, and laborious work. 'Melancholia' (a design we scarcely understand), 'The Horse of Death,' 'The Nativity,' 'St. Hubert,' and several small Madonnas, well suited to arouse alike

the zeal of Christian believers, and the admiration of artists, are perhaps worthy of honour, rather on account of the great manual skill than the inventive power displayed in them. Albert Dürer excelled all goldsmiths in carving metal, and all artists in his skill as a designer, and in his knowledge of engraving.

All Albert Dürer's landscapes, intersected and enlivened by rivers and full of fortified castles and turreted houses, are engraved with a pleasing fineness of execution. It is true that the aërial perspective is not very good, but the incorrectness of the relative proportions is in a great measure atoned for by the delicate finish of the distances. Albert Dürer excelled in every style. His engraved portraits show his great knowledge of physiognomy, his execution is always good, and his works are excellent models for his successors, who have only to yield to his influence to be successful.

Albert Altdorfer lived at Ratisbon; yet he was entirely under the influence of Albert Dürer, and tried to imitate his style. He is supposed to have introduced into Germany the fashion of engraving in miniature—a practice which gained for the German engravers who adopted it the title of *petits maîtres*. Following Dürer's example, most of these *petits maîtres* went to Italy, where they gained a certain beauty of style hitherto unknown in their country. Altdorfer, however, who copied many of Marc-Antonio's engravings, and palpably borrowed from them

in his own compositions, did not gain anything either by his reproductions or his thefts. His drawing remains inferior, without character or expression; his heads are ugly, and sometimes grotesque; his engraving, which is delicate and often skilful, is only of real interest when he employs himself in goldsmith's work or ornaments. These German *petits maîtres* were all jewellers; and as they always looked at nature in miniature, it is only as workers in gold that they repay study.

Bartholomew Beham felt the expediency of confining himself to this kind of work, and executed with rare delicacy, 'The Virgin Nursing the Infant Jesus,' 'Cleopatra,' 'Children Lying by Deaths' Heads,' and twenty other engravings, in which the skilful and careful work makes up for some unfortunate errors of taste, which are to be regretted in an artist of talent. Two portraits of Charles V. and Ferdinand I., engraved in 1531, are Bartholomew Beham's principal works; and they are so true to nature, that they may rank among the best productions of the German school. Hans-Sebald Beham, like his uncle and master, Bartholomew Beham, worked at Nuremberg. He scrupulously followed the lessons he received; and his engravings differ so little from those of his master, that it would be difficult to distinguish them from each other, but for the initials beneath them. Neither of them shrank from ugliness, and both were equally skilled in all the resources

of the graver, which enabled them to cut into the copper with a rare dexterity. Hans-Sebald Beham produced more works than his uncle. Unfortunately he sometimes exceeded the bounds of propriety, and some of his engravings gained for their author the reputation of a debauchee and drunkard, which is contradicted, however, by the rest of his works. Nothing but constant application and hard work could have enabled him to produce so many engravings; and we cannot therefore believe that a man who produced so many works with so much patience and talent could have passed his life in public-houses. We will therefore erase from the history of art this imputation which Sandrart has cast on Hans-Sebald Beham; we prefer to consider him, what he in reality was, an earnest and hard-working man, who made the mistake of sometimes turning aside to represent scenes which were not condemned in his day as they are in ours.

James Binck, who was born at Cologne, and died at Königsburg about 1560, copied from all the great masters—Marc-Antonio, Albert Dürer, Martin Schöngauer, and Hans-Sebald Beham; and succeeded in fairly imitating the style of each. With Albert Dürer and Marc-Antonio his engraving is soft, with Beham it is rather heavy.

When engraving his own original compositions, he is scarcely the same artist. The close and clear-cut strokes of his work, when he is reproducing copies

by the great masters, is replaced by thin and widely-distanced lines, which scarcely suffice to mark the outlines. Binck's style of figures is not so ugly as that of most of his contemporaries. He spent two years in Italy (1529 and 1530), and was not uninfluenced by the beauty he was able to study there.

If George Pencz had engraved nothing but 'Jesus surrounded by Little Children,' he would have ranked high among these *petits maîtres*. In this well-arranged composition, the mothers and children are dressed in the German style of the sixteenth century; and it is therefore not only a really artistic work, but also an authentic record of the costumes of the period. The same may be said of his other numerous works. His figures are generally represented in the costume of that time, and this custom, which has in our day brought upon it so much criticism, is more trustworthy evidence on this vexed question than the false historical records in favour during the following centuries. If Italy influenced George Pencz, it was northern Italy; Venice and her painters pleased him better than Rome and the pupils of Raphael, and he doubtless had Giovanni Bellini, Titian, and Giorgione in his mind when designing some of the figures of his compositions. It is true that he chiefly looked at the smaller and more minute side of nature—a peculiarity of many goldsmiths who, even when most talented, diminished not only the size, but also the character, of all they represented.

Among the best of *petits maîtres* who faintly reflected Dürer's style, Henry Aldegrever must take a place. He was born in Westphalia in 1502, and died about 1555; he passed the greater part of his life at Nuremberg with Dürer's engravings constantly before him. He caught his style in a great measure, especially in the *pose* of his heads. Aldegrever tried every style, but was most successful when he merely represented the people of his time; no invention was needed in them, and his copies are admirable; he gets rid of his usual exaggeration, or the undue length of his figures is disguised by the draperies, which do not hang in such abrupt folds as in designs of his own invention. He surpassed all competitors in the ornaments and figures with which he embellished the sheaths of knives and daggers, showing far more skill and imaginative power in them than in works with the human figure for its principal object.

Some few artists practised etching at the time when line-engraving was justly rising to such distinction in Germany. Albert Dürer set the example; but he did not succeed so well with it as with his other works. His style and manner were not much copied. This mode of engraving seems not to have suited the Germans; they preferred a less expeditious process, which would allow them to mature their conceptions before giving expression to them. The Hopffers—David, Jerome, and Lambert—had little taste for drawing, and their etching shows but little variety.

Fig. 19.—German Costume. H. ALDEGREVER.

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It would not be easy to explain the esteem in which their works are held, for the copies of their predecessors' compositions are valueless on account of their inexactitude. Hans-Sebald Lautensack and Augustine Hirschvogel, both painters from Nuremberg, also left a number of etchings; but they do no more to raise our opinion of German etchers than those by the Hopffers. Although drawn with a fine and incisive needle, these small landscapes by Lautensack do not equal his portraits in line-engraving. The latter are remarkable for much character and for the truth of the physiognomy; they even excel his portrait of George Rockenbach, which is merely etched. Neither do Augustine Hirschvogel's plates raise our opinion of etching in Germany, although they may be of value to collectors of curiosities. It was scarcely worth while to notice these artists, as they left no good specimens of their work.

Line-engraving declined when the school founded by Albert Dürer began to lose its renown. The taste for small things, such as ornaments and jewelry, survived, but the art was doomed. It had lost much that it had once possessed in the hands of the skilful engravers we have named. The period of originality had gone by, and we find none but second-rate artists, who had lost their own individuality in imitating their predecessors.

Virgilius Solis was born at Nuremberg in 1514, and

died in the same town in 1570. Like the *petits maîtres*, he attempted to perpetuate the style of his predecessors; but he was very inferior to them. He could scarcely draw a life-like figure if he did not copy it. His work is meagre, and without softness or charm; among his numerous works a few prettily decorated pieces of jewelry are alone worthy of notice. Virgilius Solis and Jost Amman engraved a series of portraits of the kings of France, which added nothing to their reputation. Jost Amman, who supplied numerous designs to wood-engravers, has left a number of fine and delicate, but monotonous, etchings. The designs are small and confused. One of Amman's best works of this kind is a portrait of Gaspard de Coligny, surrounded with ornaments and small scenes relating to his life. His own wood-engravings, and those he caused to be executed after his designs, are, however, far superior to any of his etchings; and the series of costumes published in his name show little knowledge, but a varied and fertile imagination, and contribute more to his fame than all his etchings.

Theodore de Bry also belongs to this group of late-coming imitators of the *petits maîtres*. He was born at Liege in 1528, and established himself at an early age at Frankfurt, where he died in 1598. He was one of the most industrious artists of the sixteenth century. His works prove his great predilection for jewelry. He was aided in his large publications, such

as 'The Long and Short Voyages,' by his sons, especially by John, who often showed himself equal to his father. But he appears to us to have succeeded best with small subjects in which thousands of small figures are represented, or when he engraved ornaments, which betoken a decided style and a vivid imagination. In this he resembled those engravers who rivalled goldsmiths in their delicate handling and love of small dimensions. Theodore de Bry closes the list of German engravers who worked in miniature, and aspired to no style and to no ideal.

At the end of the sixteenth century German art took a new direction ; or, to be more exact, it lost all its originality. Native engravers were monopolised by publishers, who were more anxious that they should work much than well. Matthew Merian, the author of an immense number of views of towns ; the Kilian family, all engravers of portraits ; Dominic Custos, a Fleming naturalized at Augsburg ; Martin Greuter, a great admirer of allegorical subjects and armorial bearings ; the Haïds, who employed mezzotint engraving ; and many others, are only worthy of remembrance in the history of art on account of their portraits of distinguished persons, and their copies of monuments and compositions which are now destroyed. Many of their engravings are skilfully executed, that is all. The Germans of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries all yielded to the same temptation, and thought too much of fine strokes. They de-

lighted, above all things, in showing off their skill of execution, and forgot that knowledge of drawing is indispensable to a good engraving.

Wenceslas Hollar was an exception to this. In his frequent and long journeys he was able to compare

Fig. 20.—A Lady of Bâle. W HOLLAR.

rival schools, and all his engravings are so entirely original that not one betrays the influence of his master, Matthew Merian. Hollar's execution is vivid and harmonious, Merian's cold and dull. The pupil

Autotype.

THE ROYAL EXCHANGE, 1644.

From the Engraving by Wenceslas Hollar.

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excelled in copying the human face, he rendered admirably the transparency of glass, the brilliancy of metals, the hair or feathers of animals, and the gloss of textile fabrics. But he required a good model before him, and when he was without one his engravings were decidedly inferior.

Wendel Dieterlin, unlike Hollar who travelled incessantly, never left Alsace. He was not content with being a skilful architect and a celebrated painter, he also published, in a collection which is now highly valued, a number of specimens of decorative art of a most original style. Highly gifted and full of enthusiasm he was daunted by nothing ; with admirable spirit he invented forms of the greatest variety, and, had he not imprudently introduced figures of questionable taste into these ornaments, he might have taken honourable rank among the architectural engravers of the Renaissance. His adventurous needle, while remaining entirely under his control, went boldly to work on the copper, producing ingenious and facile strokes, and his wildest efforts were often crowned with unexpected success.

After these artists, true art appears to have become extinct in Germany. J.-E. Ridinger, Ch. Dietrich, Ch.-B. Rode and Weirotter were painters of inferior talent, who occasionally used the needle, but with very little success. Hans-Elias Ridinger owes the little reputation he has rather to his hunting-pieces and scenes from animal life, than to the talent of his

engravings. Dietrich struggled hard, but without avail, to recall Raphael's style, but he did not impose even on the most ignorant; his engraving was clumsy, his drawing bad, and he knew nothing of *chiaroscuro.* Christian-Bernard Rode, born at Berlin in 1725, journeyed a great deal; but gained nothing by his travels; his engravings are pretentious and very careless; there is no real thought in his pompous compositions, they have neither order, taste, nor knowledge of effect. The landscapes of Francis Edmund Weirotter are of scarcely any interest, and to complete our review of engravers of the German school we must cross the Rhine and go to Paris, where artists appear to have assembled to learn from French masters the secrets of an art which their own country had lost.

John George Wille and his friend George Frederick Schmidt went to France at an early age, and there began to study engraving. They remained in that country and earned their living by working with the publisher Odieuvre. Wille soon out-distanced his competitors by his ease of execution. Hyacinthe Rigaud soon saw some of his engravings, and at once recognised their merits; he aided the young artist by introducing him to amateurs and enabling him to copy important works, and the young German's reputation was soon greater than that of any French engraver of his time. Every distinguished visitor to Paris who cared at all for art, solicited an introduction

to him, and each one justly acknowledged the greatness of his genius and the refinement of his taste; for John George Wille possessed a large collection of artobjects and pictures, and many of the latter are reproduced in his engravings. The chief beauty of his best works is their brilliant and careful execution; none knew better than he how to vary his work to suit the object represented. This perfect execution has its drawbacks. It gives the engraving a decidedly metallic appearance, and we are distracted by the beauty of the details when we would fain admire the work as a whole. The artist thinks more of his own fame than that of his model; and in this he has mistaken his aim; for should not an engraver identify himself entirely with his original and devote his whole energy to re-producing faithfully the work of the painter he has chosen?

George Frederick Schmidt began life with his intimate friend and fellow-countryman Wille. They came to Paris together, and their early struggles were the same. Schmidt found a friend in Nicholas Lancret, as Wille had in Hyacinthe Rigaud. Schmidt was introduced to the engraver Larmessin and prepared his plates for him, employing his few moments of leisure in engraving small portraits for the publisher Odieuvre, which, if they added little to his reputation, at least helped to earn him a living. He soon thought of setting up for himself, and Hyacinthe Rigaud, who had seen some of Schmidt's works, again proved his

sagacity by entrusting to the young artist a portrait of the Count of Evreux, which he had finished. He was completely satisfied with the result. This was most fortunate for Schmidt, as Rigaud, convinced of his powers, gave him, with the prelate's consent, the portrait of St. Albin, archbishop of Cambray, to copy, and the cordial and well-deserved reception of this beautiful engraving completely established its author's fame. From this time (1742) Schmidt brought out engravings every year, all testifying to his knowledge and industry.

His style of engraving somewhat resembled that of Wille. He generally used the graver only, and, in addition to ease of execution, the beauty of his productions is enhanced by his knowledge of colouring. Sometimes, unfortunately, his cleverness led him also astray, and he did not copy with sufficient care the painting he was rendering. He was less successful in etching. Although some of his portraits in this style fetch a high price at sales, we cannot admire them much. Etching needs great freedom of execution; and in this branch of art Schmidt did not excel. He seems to have entered with his needle into a hopeless competition with the graver.

In any case J. G. Wille and G. Fr. Schmidt, who went to study French art, themselves greatly influenced it. Their fame exceeded that of their fellow-students. Bervic, the master of modern French engraving, studied diligently under the judicious direction

of J. G. Wille, and afterwards faithfully transmitted to his own pupils the lessons he had himself received.

After these self-exiled masters, Germany can proudly name several artists who had the restoration of engraving in their native country much at heart. Christian Frederick Müller gained well-merited distinction by his engraving after the 'Madonna di San Sisto.' Joseph Keller in his engraving after Raphael's celebrated cartoon of 'The Dispute on the Sacrament,' and other works, has shown his power of faithfully rendering the grandeur of the most exalted compositions. Finally James Felsing, who did not aspire to works of equal difficulty, also gave proof of the practical skill he had acquired by his studies of the works of his predecessors.

CHAPTER VI.

ENGRAVING IN ENGLAND.

Engraving on Wood—W. Caxton—The Influence of Foreign Masters on English Art—Its Originality in the Eighteenth Century, and its Influence on our Age.

IN England there are schools both of painting and engraving. They are worthy of careful study, whatever those may think who have never crossed the Channel. They were established rather late, but are now more than a century old, and in this short time they have reached the same excellence as the schools in neighbouring countries; if England has attracted to her shores foreign masters such as Holbein, Vandyck, Petitot, Largillière and others, she has profited by their examples, and the French, who were at one time aided in the same manner by the Italians, should be the last to reproach her with this. Besides, in modern times, the English school has had a great influence upon the French, which it would be uncandid to deny. We allude to the romantic movement which replaced the principles of David (still followed by some few Frenchmen) by others of a very different kind. However, we have now to consider engraving only, and we must begin by stating that the English

were at first less enthusiastic than the French about the new discovery, although they were equally ready to avail themselves of it. This coldness may be accounted for by the strictness of their religion, which excluded paintings from their churches and engravings from their prayer-books; whereas the earliest woodcuts of Italy, Germany, France, and the Low Countries appeared in devotional works.

It is strange that the earliest book printed by the first English printer, William Caxton, is in French, and it is also the first printed in that language. Its title is, 'Cy commence le volume intitulé le recueil des hystoires de Troyes composé par vénérable homme Raoul le feure prêtre chappellain de mon très-redoubt seigneur Monseigneur le duc Philippe de Bourgongne en l'an de grâce mil cccc lxiiii.' Unfortunately, in England as in other countries, engraving had at first no individual character. William Caxton seldom illustrated his books with engravings, and when he did indulge in them he could only employ awkward carvers of images; and on this account his plates are of no artistic value. The second edition (but without date) of the first book printed in England in 1471 ('The Game and Playe of the Chesse'), contains representations of a player at a chess-board, a king, two knights, and a bishop, but there is nothing to betray their origin or nationality except the text which surrounds them. It is the same with another book not quite so rare, 'Thymage,

or Mirrour of the World,' 1481. The few engravings in it represent a professor teaching grammar, or a logician lecturing his pupils from his chair, they are as devoid of art as the preceding ones, a decisive proof of the small skill of the early English engravers. In an edition of Æsop's Fables ('The Subtyl Hystoryes and Fables of Esope') published three years later, in 1484, by Caxton, we find some engravings copied from preceding Latin and French editions, which would seem to confirm our opinion of the inferiority of other nations to ourselves, if any comparison be possible between works of no talent and possessing archæological interest only.

There were certainly many other books containing woodcuts published in England in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but it would not be worth while to detain the reader by mentioning them. We will merely state that English authors asserted the merits of their own engravings, and took part in the discussion on the origin of the invention, emphatically repudiating the claims of all competitors by the assertion that engraving is not a modern invention at all, because, according to a certain verse in Genesis, Tubal Cain invented it.* The argument is original, but it

* The text of Genesis upon which the authors who fix 2975 B.C. as about the date of the invention of engraving rely, is as follows :—"And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron : and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah."—Gen. iv. 22.

would be waste of time to refute it. Instead of going so far back, we will commence our study when English engraving acquired an individual character and was practised by men of talent.

We begin with John Payne, who was born in London in 1606, and died in the same place in 1648. He did not form a school or at once rise to eminence, but his engravings, executed with the graver alone, are superior to those of his predecessors. He was a pupil of Simon de Passe, a Flemish artist, who spent many years in England. John Payne executed, somewhat harshly, vignettes, ornaments, and portraits, succeeding better, like most of his fellow-countrymen, with the human face than with anything else. William Faithorne was born in 1620, about the same time as John Payne, and died in 1691. He raised engraving in England to a high standard of excellence. His biography is interesting. A pupil of Peack, an English painter, Faithorne, like his master, embraced the cause of Charles I.; was made prisoner on the fall of that monarch and shut up at Aldersgate. He employed the leisure moments of his captivity in engraving, and it was in prison that he executed the portrait of the Duke of Buckingham. The reputation of his early works, and the influence of his friends, obtained him his liberty. But on leaving prison he refused to swear allegiance to Cromwell, and was therefore banished from his country. He came to France and continued his studies, first with Philip of

Champagne and then with Robert Nanteuil, whose lessons were of great service to him. He soon became famous, and when events allowed of his return to England in 1650, he was cordially welcomed by his fellow-countrymen on account of his talent. Like his friend and master, Nanteuil, he drew portraits in three shades with perfect success, and they soon became much in vogue. Fortunately, he did not give up engraving, and he was most apt in seizing the expression of the physiognomy, as seen in the numerous engravings and drawings he has left. It would be impossible to excel his interesting and life-like portraits. Formed by the lessons he received from Nanteuil, and imbued with his principles, he sometimes equalled him, but never imitated him so much as to lose his own originality. Nanteuil's portraits betoken a profound knowledge, and at the same time, are in the self-contained and reserved style peculiar to the French school; whilst Faithorne's engravings after Vandyck or his admirers, or designed by the artist himself, show the influence which the illustrious pupil of Rubens exercised on the rising school, and are remarkable for a power of colouring to which the French engraver never aspired. The portraits of R. Bayfeild, William Paston, William Sanderson, and others, fully justify the esteem in which the works of William Faithorne, surnamed the Elder, are held. His other engravings are not equally clever. 'The Holy Family,' after Simon Vouet, or 'The Virgin

Fig 21. Portrait of R. Bayfeild. Engraved by WILLIAM FAITHORNE.

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caressing the Infant Jesus,' after Laurent de la Hyre, which slightly recall the style of Couvay and of Mellan, without all their talent, would not alone entitle Faithorne to very high rank.

Many artists endeavoured to follow the manner of William Faithorne, but not one had sufficient originality to merit a place in our review of the English school. They were all inferior. Their fellow-countrymen had so poor an opinion of them that they sent across the Channel whenever they wished to have a valuable work engraved. Nicolas Dorigny was sent for from France to reproduce on copper Raphael's famous cartoons, preserved at Hampton Court;* Baron copied the paintings of Rubens and Vandyck in English collections, and it was not until the eighteenth century that we find artists in England sufficiently skilful with the graver to reproduce the best works of art which had accumulated in their country.

We must not suppose that there were no engravers in England during this long period. Wenceslas Hollar, a German established in London, gave a praiseworthy impulse to etching. Again, Prince Rupert introduced into the United Kingdom the style of engraving called *mezzotint* or the *English style*, so successfully have English artists adopted it. We must speak more particularly of these two processes later, now we are concerned merely with

* Now in the South Kensington Museum.

line engraving and we must again allude to French influence.

Robert Strange, born in 1723, died in London in 1795. When quite young he crossed the Channel and went to study in Paris with Philip Lebas, who taught him the first elements of engraving. But Robert Strange soon surpassed his master in the handling of his tools, and left the studio in which his talent had been developed to go to Italy and study the great masters. He spent five years in that country, working with enthusiasm at paintings by Raphael, Titian, Correggio, Guido, and Carlo Maratti. He did not return to establish himself in London until his studies were so complete that he imagined he had nothing more to learn. Unfortunately he overrated the advantages of his ease of execution, and his engravings show insufficient knowledge of drawing. Few artists excelled Strange in engraving; his work is pleasing and well shaded, his strokes are admirably managed, rounding off the outlines and crossing each other without monotony or confusion. There are no signs of weakness or weariness in any engraving of his; all show thorough and profound knowledge of the resources of his art. What a pity that all this should be marred by imperfection of drawing! The artist with all his intelligence thought more of giving the exact appearance of the designs before him than of interpreting their character and style.

William Woollett, also born in England, and a

pupil of John Finney, directed his attention to landscape. He engraved figures also, and some important compositions, such as 'The Battle of the Hogue,' and the 'Death of General Wolfe,' but he never succeeded better than in his reproductions of pictures by Claude Lorraine, Wilson, or Pillement. The beautiful gradations and fine proportions of his plates are unsurpassed; no predecessor obtained such varied results by the aid of the graver alone. The distant horizons, lit up by a last ray from the setting sun, are accurately designed, and are perfectly distinct although so far away. They diminish gradually whilst the trees and grass of the foregrounds stand out in bold relief. The latter are cut with a very large graver which deeply penetrates the copper, leaving large grooves far apart from each other into which the ink is plentifully absorbed. Claude, whose works, as is well known, have always been highly prized in England, inspired Woollett's best engravings. The engraver was irresistibly attracted by the grand and masterly disposition of the forms, the deep infinite horizons, and the beautiful scenery of the landscapes, and he succeeded in interpreting the great qualities of the painter. Claude Lorraine was never better understood than by Woollett, and he so thoroughly identified himself with his model, that his engravings are rivalled by none but the superb etchings from the great landscape painter's own hand.

Francis Vivarès, though born in France near Mont-

pellier, may be included in the English school, because he spent the greater part of his life in England, and learnt his art there. He rendered Claude Lorraine's works with almost as much skill as Woollett. He too confined himself almost entirely to landscapes of a particular style by Lorraine, Gaspar Poussin, or Patel. His plastic style of work admirably suited grand compositions such as theirs. The judiciously distributed light, affecting each object differently, in which these masters delighted, is transmitted to copper with remarkable accuracy. It would appear impossible for art to render the sun, especially with no resources at its command but black ink and white paper, and yet his rays seem to inundate these engravings by Vivarès. Like the master from whom he took his inspiration, the engraver thoroughly understood the laws of light and shadow. A man of ingenuity and resource, he arranged his shadows so that those parts meant to be in the direct rays of the sun were scarcely covered by light strokes, and by being placed in juxtaposition with condensed lines were thrown up with extraordinary brilliancy by the shadows which surrounded them.

William Wynne Ryland, born in London in 1732, learnt engraving with Ravenet, a French artist established in England. He afterwards went to France, entered the studio of Boucher, where he etched two landscapes after that master, with some ability. He then took lessons for a time from James

Philip Lebas, and returned to his native land after five years' absence. Unfortunately, on his return to England, he neither profited by what he had learnt in France, nor by the examples set before him, but was attracted by a new style introduced by an Italian engraver, Francesco Bartolozzi, which consisted in imitating with the graver the effect produced on paper with a pencil. In the hands of a good draughtsman this process could, and did, accomplish much; but Ryland had not talent enough to turn it to good account; and then he generally worked at the vulgar creations of Angelica Kauffmann, thereby gradually losing the position he had gained by his first works. An accidental circumstance, however, suddenly compelled him to give up engraving. He was accused of forgery, tried, convicted, and condemned, and after that his name was never heard again.

The list of English line-engravers is soon exhausted: there remain two only, George Vertue and Abraham Raimbach, who may be said to have attained any distinction in the history of English art. George Vertue excelled in reproducing the pictures of Sir Godfrey Kneller. His engraving is very correct, almost monotonously so; but the English aristocracy patronised him because he was very skilful with physiognomy, and rendered most happily the distinguished air of lords and ladies. The Prince of Wales charged him to make a collection of engravings for him, and Horace Walpole, who stood high as a man of letters and a poli-

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tician, did not scorn to use the notes on English artists collected by the engraver. In the first edition of his 'Anecdotes of Painting,' published in 1762, he places his own name after that of George Vertue; and at the end of his work he has a long note on the English artist, in which he awards just praise to the talent of his fellow-countryman.

Abraham Raimbach closes the list of English engravers. He seemed born to interpret the works of the painter Wilkie. He has reproduced the well-conceived and spirited pictures called 'Blind Man's Buff,' 'The Rent-Day,' and the 'Village Politicians' with surprising delicacy and skill. In spite of their large size these prints are what are called *genre* engravings; they are prepared and nearly finished in etching, and then almost entirely retouched with the graver; and as combined by Raimbach, the two processes produced most pleasing results. The joyous or grave faces of the children playing round their fathers, or the small tenants impatiently waiting to pay the money which is due, are faithfully transferred to the metal. The bright and pleasing appearance of the paintings is also rendered, and there is a general harmony about Raimbach's engravings which Wilkie's canvasses have now in some measure lost. Abraham Raimbach is certainly worthy to rank high among his fellow-countrymen; and in a general history of the art of engraving, his works class him amongst those who best understood all the resources of their art, and

excelled in rendering the different passions depicted in the human countenance.

Francis Barlow deserves mention on account of his delicate and skilful etchings of animals.

Although there were so few clever line-engravers or etchers in England, in spite of the efforts and attractive example of Wenceslas Hollar, Mezzotint Engraving, introduced, as we have said, by Prince Rupert, was at once enthusiastically adopted in that country. It was more successful in England than elsewhere, and its rapid triumphs are easily accounted for. The works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, of Gainsborough, and of Sir Thomas Lawrence, softly and agreeably coloured, and not very strictly drawn, were well suited to this kind of engraving, which allows of vagueness of outline and great freedom of treatment. Anthony Vandyck's portraits taken in England were equally good subjects. This was at once recognised by a number of English artists. Not only were there more mezzotint engravers in England than elsewhere, they were also more skilful and of readier invention than any of their foreign competitors. We are not sure who founded this school of engraving, who was the first master, or what influence he exercised over his contemporaries.

Richard Earlom, whose name is perhaps the best known, did not, like most of his contemporaries, excel in portraiture, he owes his reputation rather to his justly admired engravings of fruit and flowers after Van Huysum, and his 'Bathsheba leading Abishag

to David' is considered the *chef-d'œuvre* of mezzotint engraving. We ourselves do not admire his works sufficiently to consider him the founder of a school, and we still hold to our opinion, that English artists treated portraiture better than historical or *genre* paintings. It is easy to review other English works of exalted style, but it would take a long time to enumerate only the best of the portrait-painters. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the most celebrated of them, supplied eager engravers with numerous subjects, and a review of his works would introduce us to all the mezzotint engravers of England. Amongst so many beautiful engravings it is difficult to know which to prefer. J. R. Smith, in his portraits of Master John Crewe and Lady Caroline Montagu, shows equal talent to that of V. Green in the portraits of the Duke of Bedford, of W. Chambers, or the Lady Caroline Howard; and MacArdell, J. Watts, James Ward, J. Faber, J. and Thomas Watson, E. Fisher, John Dixon, W. Dickinson, G. Clint, C. H. Hodges, C. Turner, John Murphy, C. Corbutt, S. Paul, J. Grozer, John Jones, J. Spilsbury, and R. Dunkarton, engraved with equal skill the portraits of Mrs. Beaufoy, Joseph Baretti, Richard Burke, the Duke of Devonshire, Drummond, the Archbishop of York, John Paterson, Garrick, Lady Elizabeth Lee, the Duke of Leinster, Lady Charles Spencer, Robert Haldane, John Lee, Viscount G. Malden and Lady Capel, the Duke of Portland. Mrs. Chambers, Viscountess Spencer, Lady Seaford,

Fox, Miss Jacob, and Miss Horneck. These engravings are such exact imitations of the originals, that Reynolds must himself have superintended the artists. None of the engravers, however, had any individual character to distinguish them from each other. In spite of the difference of their educations they all worked with about equal skill, all were acquainted with the resources of mezzotint, all equally careful to render the gradations of shade in the works they copied. Many used bistre instead of black ink, as being better suited to the transitions from light to dark, and producing altogether a more harmonious effect.

Godfrey Kneller, although born at Lubeck in 1648, and formed in Rembrandt's school, must be included among English painters, notwithstanding his foreign origin and education. He established himself in London when very young, and never again left it; his style of painting resembles that of English artists more than any other, and he seems to have forgotten the lessons he had received from the moment he set foot in Britain. Many line-engravers copied his paintings, but J. Smith was almost the only one who rendered them in mezzotint, and in return the painter took the engraver's portrait, which he at once transferred to copper. Amongst the other portraits engraved by J. Smith after Sir Godfrey Kneller, the principal are those of William III., King of England, the painter William Vandevelde, the Countess

of Salisbury, and John, Duke of Marlborough. These engravings are exact copies of the master's somewhat formal paintings, but the execution is heavy and rather inharmonious.

Thomas Gainsborough, a charming painter, whose works were deservedly successful during his life, had not the will or the opportunity to gather around him engravers to reproduce his works. Yet mezzotint is peculiarly well suited to render the light effects of his paintings; and portraits of the Prince of Wales engraved by John Raphael Smith, of Richard Warren by John Jones, of the Earl of Derby by George Keating, and of Henry Duke of Buccleuch by J. Dixon, not only show the talent of their engravers, but also how well mezzotint could interpret the brightness and freshness of these pictures which are true and grand representations of the English aristocracy. Unfortunately only a few of Gainsborough's paintings have been engraved, and the very pretty picture called 'The Blue Boy,' which was so justly admired in the Exhibition of 1862, was not reproduced by engravers in the time of the painter. Sir Thomas Lawrence was more fortunate; he had not, it is true, many imitators, but he met with one engraver, Samuel Cousins, who produced a fine masterpiece after one of his paintings. We allude to the portrait of Pius VII., the best mezzotint engraving of modern times. Thoroughly well-instructed in his art, the engraver has preserved all the life and grandeur of the original; he has managed

the light with the greatest tact, and drawn the pontiff's head with a power unknown to most of his contemporaries. Charles Turner also engraved an excellent portrait of William Pitt after Lawrence; and he himself, England's last great master, was fortunate enough to find many contemporary artists who thoroughly understood his works, and interpreted them with praiseworthy talent.

We have not yet spoken of the humourist school. It however gained great distinction in England; and we intend to close our study of English engraving with a notice of this style, which is of rather historical than artistic interest, as it borrowed its subjects largely from literature, politics, and contemporary customs; and would lose much by being considered from a merely artistic point of view.

William Hogarth is the master of this style. Born of poor parents, he was apprenticed to a goldsmith instead of being sent to a good master, who could have prepared him for a literary career. His father had struggled in vain all his life, in spite of a good education, to attain a higher position than that of a printer's overseer, and his example early showed his son the illusory character of a literary life. He turned resolutely from literature, and this man, who was to inaugurate a new style of art, began life by chasing metals, and engraving armorial bearings, figures, and arabesques on silver, gold, or bronze. It was thus he learnt the trade of an engraver. After working for

some years with a goldsmith, he determined to leave the humble profession of a copyist and devote himself to art properly so-called. He studied nature with enthusiasm, looking always at the picturesque side of every creature and of every thing, and noting in his memory or on paper that which struck his attention on his rambles. The wretched life of his parents had left a tone of sadness on his observing and inquiring mind, which made him see the saddest and most painful side of humanity. Thus his ideal was not beauty of form, or elegance of outline, not graceful action or noble attitude, but truth and power of expression. Though harsh and rough sometimes, his work is always full of energy and character. Fielding said of his friend Hogarth: "The figures of other painters breathe, those of Hogarth think." He was right. Hogarth is more of a philosopher than an artist. His paintings, often dull and inharmonious, are no doubt cleverly composed, and some figures are really artistic; but the thought is everything; the subject absorbs all attention and interest at the expense of the drawing and execution. 'The Harlot's Progress,' 'The Rake's Progress,' or 'Marriage à la Mode,' are really comedies in several acts, moral comedies in which the author does not shrink from a coarse and revolting representation of certain actions, for the sake of teaching how terribly they are afterwards expiated. William Hogarth did not confine himself merely to composing pictures, he also engraved them, a fortunate circumstance, as his

Fig. 22.—Marriage à la Mode. Engraved by WILLIAM HOGARTH.

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works retained their original style and attractions better than they could have done in the hands of other artists. His engravings were nearly completed in etching, and then most skilfully retouched with the graver. Thinking above all of expression, he used the needle or graver for that purpose as readily as the brush, and his engravings not only possess all the qualities of his pictures, but excel them in their harmony.

There is a wide difference between William Hogarth and other English painters of manners and caricaturists. The master is anxious about the philosophical side of his work, and desirous of giving to his compositions all the value of a moral lesson, but the caricaturists who succeeded him cared little to make their works of general interest. If they intended to ridicule anyone they exaggerated his physical defects, or represented him in rags, or wretched and scorned,—that was all; and if they did depict one of the thousand miseries, of life they carried buffoonery to the greatest extreme, the figures, the gesture, the expression, the dress, are exaggerated to such an extent that they do not always provoke even a laugh.

James Gillray, the most famous of these caricaturists, was born at Lanark, in 1757: like Hogarth, he began work under a goldsmith, but his passion for the theatre was so great, that he quitted the studio, which he had but irregularly attended, to join a strolling company of players. In this new career, he had

to endure mortifications of all kinds. After wandering from town to town without meeting in any with the success he had dreamt of, he had the good sense to leave those who had led him astray and return to the paternal roof. On his return to London he went through the course of study at the Royal Academy, and we are told joined the studio of W. Ryland. He began as a caricaturist in 1779 and devoted himself to this kind of work without intermission. Every event of any importance furnished him with materials for caricature, and every conspicuous person had to appear before Gillray's tribunal. When at the height of his power, William Pitt is represented playing at cup-and-ball with the terrestrial globe. Later, in 1797, when the minister, lately so powerful, could not meet the rush upon the funds caused by the fear of invasion, he is drawn as King Midas, with an ass's head. The Emperor Napoleon is said to have supplied the English engraver with the subject of many caricatures. The greater number are coarse. A political caricaturist, Gillray placed his talent at the service of the passions of the moment, and this entitles him to be considered one of the artists who contributed much to throwing light upon the history of England in the reign of George III.

Thomas Rowlandson may be classed with Gillray, although he did not take up exactly the same line. He was born a year earlier, in July, 1756, and directed his attention rather to the manners of the people than

to politics. The action of his characters is excellent, and he was most successful in the arrangement of a number of figures in one group. He used the needle as much as the pencil or pen; he engraved merely for the sake of multiplying the grotesque scenes he invented, without caring at all about the process he employed or to display his own skill. His chief aim was to expose the absurdities of his contemporaries, and in this he generally succeeded. Towards the close of his life Thomas Rowlandson designed vignettes for books. The illustrated book which gained him the greatest success in England was 'Doctor Syntax,' an account of the innumerable adventures of a luckless traveller pursued by misfortune. The etchings, coloured by hand, which accompany the text show the witty side of Thomas Rowlandson's talent, and may be considered some of his best productions. Rowlandson squandered his fortune in Paris, partly at play. When his resources were all but exhausted he wisely determined to work hard again. He returned to London and went through the course of study at the Royal Academy. But his old propensities regained the mastery and led him into fresh follies. He needed the spur of necessity to make him work, and his life was a series of alternations between want and prodigality. When old and infirm, with faculties as much impaired by dissipation as by age, he sank into poverty and died on the 22nd of April, 1827.

George Cruickshank, who was also a caricaturist,

flourished soon after the artists we have named. His name is attached to an immense number of most comic vignettes. Although he produced some few good political engravings, he preferred scenes of manners which were simply and avowedly grotesque. He and his brother Robert learnt drawing with their father, Isaac Cruickshank, and he remained so long under the paternal tuition that it was quite late in life before he signed his works. The works of the father and the two brothers are so much alike that it is not easy to distinguish them. George was nevertheless the most talented. He may be considered the chief of the comic and humourist school which still exists in England. He is now old and works less than he did ; but his influence is still great over young artists, and his style is still much in favour.

CHAPTER VII.

ENGRAVING IN FRANCE.

Engravers on Wood—Engravers on Metal—The School of Fontainebleau — Portrait-painters — Nicolas Poussin and Jean Pesne—Charles Lebrun and Gérard Audran—The School of Watteau—Vignette Engravers—The School of David.

FRANCE has small claim to the invention of engraving, although she did not remain inactive while the movement was taking place in other countries. Several French woodcuts are known to belong to the middle of the fifteenth century, and are in fact contemporaneous with the earliest engravings brought out in other countries. Better still, some playing-cards of undoubted antiquity, as proved by the emblems on them, which were in use in certain reigns only, were brought out in France before the time of engravings, properly so called ; and the barbarous style of some prints, with a text or legend in French attached to them, would furnish material for the researches of modern learning. But it would be

useless to revive the question of priority ; we will leave it to the archæologists, and only notice the time when French art manifested itself in a decided and definite manner. The first book embellished with engravings appeared in France at the end of the fifteenth century, but the 'Romance of Fierabras' (Lyons, 1480), 'Belial, or the Consolation of the Poor Fishers' (1484), and other works with wood-cuts, have a fictitious value only in the eyes of amateurs on account of their antiquity, and can scarcely be regarded as really significant specimens of wood engraving. In fact, Antoine Vérard's publications, 'The Sea of Histories' (La Mer des Histoires), amongst others, printed by Jean Dupré in 1491, are the first works in which this art takes a true position ; the hatching of the engraving is still coarse ; the ornaments are without delicacy, and recall in many points the complicated arabesques of French architectural monuments of the fifteenth century ; but the invention is often happy, and we see the same love of truthful representation in them with which we are familiar in earlier miniatures. The simplicity of the expressions, the life of the figures, make up for the want of knowledge of composition, and render us indulgent to the faults of drawing, and the imperfections which abound in these early efforts. The 'Dance of Death,' printed for the first time in 1485, by Antoine Vérard, and often reprinted since, perhaps contains more interesting engravings than the 'Sea of Histories.' The persons successively sum-

moned by Death, each receive the gloomy messenger in a characteristic way ; the face of each has its own individual expression ; the Pope prepares to follow the skeleton which draws him to the tomb, with a resignation of which the Emperor is incapable ; the merchant leaves his business with despair ; the usurer cannot make up his mind to relinquish his treasure ; the knight tries to struggle with Death, who is hurrying him away ; in fact, each one is rendered in his true character, and surely the inventor of these figures is worthy to be included amongst the engravers who first raised themselves to the rank of artists.

When the French became accustomed to engravings in their histories and romances, which brought the scenes recounted visibly before them, they wished to have the same thing in the devotional books issued for their edification. They were not content with the old missals and prayer-books ornamented with miniatures, as none but rich men could possess them, and the invention of printing had created a passion for reading unknown before. Wood-engraving found a good opening in these religious works, and largely profited by it. Numbers of artists were employed by publishers anxious to meet the wishes of the public ; and although the names of these men of talent are lost, we can enumerate the printers who employed them and facilitated their efforts. Antoine Vérard and Simon Vostre occupy the first place among these printers. Books issued by them and bearing their

marks, contain small ornamental subjects, which frame the verses of psalms or short prayers, and are not always applicable to the accompanying text. The artist has turned to the Old and New Testaments, and sometimes to private life, for the subjects of his ornaments. Occasionally, by some strange whim, a profane object, such as a centaur drawing a bow, is introduced among sacred ornaments. The composition is as varied as the invention, but the style of the engravers is always the same. The figures always stand out on a back-ground covered with stippling, which is supposed to imitate the golden back-grounds of miniatures. The figures are disposed without affectation, the action is simple and life-like. There is a larger engraving at the beginning of each service, which generally represents a biblical subject; 'The Creation of Eve,' 'The Annunciation,' 'The Visitation,' or 'The Resurrection.' Although simplicity is their chief merit, there is a certain attempt at composition which shows, that although still in its infancy, the art was gradually progressing. Here and there we can detect foreign influence; some engravings recall German works, others Flemish figures, but the greater number seem to have taken their inspiration from the French miniatures, those excellent models which French engravers of the end of the fifteenth century should never have lost sight of.

The impulse once given, numbers of printers placed

their presses at the service of the new art. Philip Pigouchet and Simon Vostre together brought out in 1488 a 'Book of Hours' according to the Church of Rome. Thielman Kerver either borrowed or had copied the engravings of the same printer for his books of devotion. Gilles Hardouin, with the same object in view, employed a succession of artists, who produced some interesting works, although they were too much influenced by German art. William Eustache, William Godart, and Francis Regnault, also took part in the movement, and brought out curious works, but their publications were inferior, as they had not such skilful artists at their command. At last, however, trade encroached on art, and the demand for cheap editions led to the production of works by no means equal to the earlier ones.

But, fortunately, the sixteenth century was now opening; the movement known as the 'Renaissance' was beginning, and France, perhaps, took as active a part in it as any other country. The sculptors, Jean Goujon and Germain Pilon; the architects, Bullant, Philibert Delorme, and Pierre Lescot; the painters, Jean Cousin and the Clouets, had added entirely new lustre to French art. Engraving did not linger behind. Guided by these masters, wood-engravers in their humbler sphere showed talent at least equal to that of their neighbours. They cut wood with the same ease and delicacy, and they copied the excellent models before them so faithfully as sometimes to

sacrifice their own personality to that of the masters whose works they were rendering. The most industrious of these second-rate French masters is known under the name of the 'Petit Bernard.' He never added his name or monogram to his engravings, and we should not know who was the artist who produced so many prints in the sixteenth century, in which the delicacy of the work rivals the nicety of the drawing, but for the following notice in an edition of the Bible, dated 1680: "The figures which we give here are from the hand of an excellent worker, known in his day by the name of Salomon Bernard, or the Little Bernard, who was always well thought of by connoisseurs in this sort of work." These small compositions are animated by thousands of figures in easy groups; their action is natural, and they are drawn with elegance. French art in them clearly displays its national wit and vivacity.

The extraordinary success of the engravings of 'Petit Bernard' naturally led other artists to attempt the same style. They soon became skilful in it. At first publishers ordered devices from them to distinguish their publications from others, then followed borders of flowers, tail pieces, capital letters, in which minute works rare talent was shown, proving that art requires neither large spaces nor public applause to make its way everywhere. Unfortunately, it is difficult to class the publications of this period. One thing is certain,—they are by different artists. But

not one took the precaution of signing his works, and if a few names have escaped oblivion, it is not always certain under which works they should be placed. The name of the talented artist who drew and engraved two small works which may be considered the best wood-engravings of the sixteenth century, is absolutely unknown. We allude to the 'Figures of the Apocalypse' (Paris, Estienne Groulleau, 1547), and 'The Loves of Cupid and Psyche' (Paris, Jeanne de Marnef, widow of Denis Janot, 1546). The translation of the 'Dream of Polyphilus' (Paris, 1546), also contains engravings of a most elegant style. They reproduce the engravings of the Italian artist who adorned the edition published by the brothers Aldus at Venice in 1499, but they are modified to suit French taste. We have long sought in vain for any trustworthy evidence as to the name of the artist. Hitherto one only of this great number of wood-engravers has been the subject of a special work, and by means of the numerous engravings collected and published by his biographer, we can form a very fair idea of his talent. Geoffroy Tory, of Bourges, whose life has been completely written by M. Auguste Bernard, was at the head of a school of engravers, and all the works issued from his studio were marked with a double cross, which was, to use a modern expression, their trade-mark. The master himself worked at engraving, and although he seldom employed any sign but that common to the studio, he doubtless hoped that his

peculiar style of working on wood would suffice to prevent his productions from being confounded with those of his pupils. Indeed, it is not difficult to detect the manner of Geoffroy Tory in a certain number of engravings marked with the cross of Lorraine only, which evidently at least passed through his hands. If we take as a guide the 'Hours of the Virgin,' published by Simon de Colines and signed in full,—Geoffroy Tory,—we are sure not to make a mistake. The drawing of the ornaments and figures is that of an artist acquainted with all the resources of the art. The cutting of the wood scrupulously follows the direction of the required form, thousands of small broken-off strokes attest alike the inexperience of the engraver and his intention not to swerve from the outlines given. The style of the arabesques is borrowed from the purest sources, and resembles the antique; the supple graceful figures show the love of elegance which the artists of Fontainebleau carried to extremes. Reasoning by analogy, and without referring to any engravings but those bearing the cross of Lorraine, we can without hesitation ascribe to Geoffroy Tory 'The Entry of Henry II. into Paris in 1549,' 'The Old and New Covenants,' an allegorical composition engraved on a design, recalling the manner of Jean Cousin, and 'Francis I. listening to Machault reading his Translation of Diodorus Siculus.' These engravings, which are worthy of the first place in every choice collection, are the only ones which we feel sure

Fig. 23. Henri II. From the "Entry of Henry II. into Paris in 1549." By GEOFFROY TORY.

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were entirely engraved by Geoffroy Tory. But we must not expect too much; we can, it is true, name but few of the early French engravers, but this appears to us an additional reason for not slighting those worthy of our notice. Let not the French follow the example of some nations, who, blinded by a mistaken national pride, and thinking to enhance the glory of their fellow-countrymen, have passed over in silence many French wood-engravers of the sixteenth century, and left the most remarkable productions in oblivion.

After Geoffroy Tory and the anonymous engravers of his time who tried to imitate his manner, wood-engraving rapidly declined. Engraving on metal was coming into favour. Olivier Codoré, the author of the plates which decorate the 'Entry of Charles IX. into Paris on the 6th of March, 1672,' worked heavily, and in spite of the correctness of his drawing and his careful execution, seems to have heralded the decadence of this art. Wood-engraving, with which some French artists had succeeded so well, soon fell into the hands of artisans who looked upon it merely as an economical way of depicting passing events, or an easy mode of satisfying with biblical and fabulous subjects the popular love for allegorical and religious pictures.

It was then that Perissim and Tortorel engraved on wood the sad events of the reign of Charles IX.; their engravings met with such success that they were immediately copied on copper in France, Holland,

and Germany, and multiplied in immense numbers. This success was owing rather to the subjects themselves, drawn in the heat of the moment, as they occurred day by day, than to the talent of the artists who produced them.

At the foot of the large engravings of religious or secular subjects brought out in the sixteenth century, there are the names of many little-known publishers, who may themselves also have handled the graver; Jean Leclerc, Denis de Mathonière, Marin Bonnemer, Germain Hoyau, Nicolas Prevost, François de Gourmond, and some few more, must be considered not only as traders in the engravings of others, but also as artists who both directed studios, and set an example to their pupils by themselves taking part in the work. Unfortunately, the necessity for rapid production was detrimental to these engravings. They still retain a faint and distant resemblance to the graceful and spirited works of French art of the sixteenth century, but they are clumsily and carelessly executed. Sometimes, however, in spite of all the hasty work of the engraver, the drawing shows excellent taste and incontestable ability; it is only when trade encroaching on art first invaded and then took possession of it, that wood-engraving, so successfully practised in France for more than a century, disappeared entirely, to remain in complete oblivion for two centuries; that is to say, until our own time, when some picturesque publications forced themselves on

public notice, and a great and unexpected demand arose for similar productions. In the eighteenth century the works of Papillon, the somewhat diffuse historian of wood-engraving, created little interest. The heavy and monotonous execution of the inferior designs reproduced by him could scarcely attract attention at a time when so many copper-plate engravers were designing and engraving with such charming grace all kinds of vignettes, groups of flowers and tail-pieces for the ornamentation of books. The time was ill-chosen. Far more talent than Papillon possessed was required to effect a revival of wood-engraving, and his attempt proved abortive. Fifty years later the same design was conceived, and being worked out with talent and enthusiasm, it met with decided and brilliant success. Large publications were set on foot, and owing to the earnest intelligence of those who conducted them, they prospered beyond expectation; publishers called the most experienced designers to their aid, who in their turn trained engravers; the different processes were improved or perfected, good taste was generally diffused; the long-neglected art flourished once more, and no one now dreams of disputing the superiority of France in this popular style of engraving.

Engraving on Metal.—The French have no more claim to the invention of this than of wood-engraving. Some authors look upon certain plates engraved by a

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peculiar process, called *manière criblée*, as the oldest specimens of engraving, but we do not think this opinion will have any weight with those who know and appreciate the 'Pax' of Maso Finiguerra. Nor is France the only country which availed itself of this process.

One word only as to the execution of works done in the *manière criblée*. After covering his plate with an infinite number of small white dots on a uniformly black ground, the artist—if a worker of this kind deserve the title—marked out the shape of the figure he tried to copy with heavy strokes, and, not content with a mere copy, he even attempted shading by means of small lines produced with an instrument which rather fretted than made incisions on the metal. Being engraved on very soft material, on silver or on tin, these plates are of archæological value only—interesting from an historical, not an artistic point of view. The name of Bernard Milnet, given without consideration to the author of engravings in *manière criblée*, because of an inscription at the foot of the 'Virgin with the Infant Jesus in her Arms,' is now more than doubtful. Different interpretations have been given of this inscription. Every one is agreed that scarcely an artist of the fifteenth century, whatever his merit, cared enough for fame to sign his name in full; the greatest masters sometimes placed their monogram or some figurative sign in a corner of their plates, but many left no mark by which they can be

recognised. The work, however, is so different that it is evident one artist could not have produced all the engravings of this kind. Many engravers then used the *manière criblée* according to their ability, but none passed that boundary so difficult to define which separates true artists from artisans.

There was no distinguishing original power in the engravings in Breydenbach's book, called 'Holy Pilgrimages to Jerusalem and the adjacent Neighbourhood' (Lyon, Michel Topie de Pymont and Jacques Heremberck, 1488). They reproduce on copper, wood-engravings published at Mayence two years before, and they give us panoramas of Venice, Parenzo, Corfu, Modon, Candia, Rhodes, and a general view of the Holy Land and its environs. The engraving is in a very backward stage, but the architectural designs are careful, and on this account their author—called the Engraver of 1488—deserves honourable mention in a comprehensive review of French artists. Noël Garnier, who came soon after him, and was quite a primitive engraver, signed the greater number of his prints in full or with his initials. His copies of engravings by Albert Dürer, George Pencz, and Hans-Sebald Beham are characterized by deplorable feebleness, and show no talent whatever; he must not escape severe judgment, for at the time he lived good models were not rare, great masters were within his reach—(some of the engravings he copied were executed as late as 1540)—but he could not avail himself

of the advantages around him and the inferiority of his work is without excuse.

The first engraver on metal of whom France may be proud, and who deserves the title of master, is Jean Duvet. He was born at Langres in 1485. However much Italy may have influenced his genius he still retained his native individuality. Mantegna seems to have been his favourite master, and Jean Duvet's best work, 'The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian,' belongs to the school of the Paduan master. The series of 'The Apocalypse' and the engravings relating to the 'Amours of Henry II.,' however, seem to have been produced quite independently of foreign influence. These compositions are rather confused; the work is too much alike, the accessories are brought out as carefully as the principal figures, and the result is that the interest is divided and the eye does not at once seize the intention of the whole. Two artists of Lyons, Claude Corneille, and Jean de Gourmont signed their engravings with their monograms; a double C and a J and G interlaced. They were probably jewellers before they became engravers. Their style of working on copper resembles that of the second-rate wood-engravers who flourished at Lyons in the sixteenth century, and they were probably guided by them. They chiefly excelled in small compositions. They delighted in complicated architecture, and peopled their porticos and unfinished rotundas with small biblical or fabulous personages, which they drew

with some spirit; the neat and careful execution betraying their former occupation of goldsmiths. One of them, Jean de Gourmont, was also a painter. There is a picture of his in the Louvre, 'The Nativity,' which was formerly in the magnificent castle of Ecouen, and the same delicacy of touch and taste for architecture are observable in the painter as in the engraver.

Jean Cousin, one of the greatest artists of the 'Renaissance,' with whom most modern historians begin the history of painting in France, did not disdain to handle the needle. He was not content with supplying wood-engravers with the excellent designs which illustrate his "Treatise on Perspective' and his 'Book of Portraiture,' he wished himself to fathom the difficulties of an art which, although almost at its zenith in other countries, was only beginning to make head in France. He engraved and signed three plates: 'The Conversion of St. Paul,' 'The Annunciation,' and 'The Entombment,' impressions from which are very rare. Boldly and skilfully engraved, they would alone suffice to give a very complete idea of Jean Cousin's talent. In them we find the grandeur of style and the subdued elegance which are characteristic of this master. The different expressions of the figures are all appropriate, each face well conveys the meaning intended by the artist. Look at the holy women who are wrapping Christ's body in its shroud, they testify their grief in different ways; some bathe the feet of the corpse with tears, others, wrapped in fervent contem-

plation, are content to adore. In the 'Annunciation,' the celestial messenger is a contrast to the modest and shrinking Virgin, who receives the news with gratitude, mingled with a kind of dread. Finally 'St. Paul,' stretched on his back, among his soldiers, seems to implore Divine mercy, with his arms extended towards Heaven. We look in vain amongst early French engravers for the grand style of beauty, for the truth of action and expression which are so conspicuous in the works of this talented master.

In the sixteenth century engraving advanced in France with rapid strides. Line-engravers and etchers of great original power are very numerous, even without including those of the school of Fontainebleau. The style of Pierre Woeiriot, an artist of Lorraine, in his engravings after his own designs, resembles that of his predecessor, Jean Duvet. He, too, overdid the work in his figures. All his portraits are not of equal merit, but we are favourably impressed by his engraved likenesses of Louise Labbé, François de Serocourt, Antoine Le Pois, and of himself. In them he is seen to great advantage, either because these faces suited him better, or because they were really superior models, they entitle him to rank among the excellent and prolific portrait-takers who flourished throughout the sixteenth century in France.

Nicolas Beatrizet and Nicolo della Casa, fellow-countrymen of Woeiriot, passed their lives in Italy. They were French by birth only, and their style

resembles that of many Italian masters—the Ghisi, for instance—far more than that of any Frenchmen. Their talent was not so great that the French need care to lay claim to it; they yielded to the influence of Michael Angelo's successors, and, like all the late disciples of this great master, they copied his exaggerations, and missed the true beauty and style of his works. Etienne Dupérac, who also lived at Rome, devoted himself entirely to copying the picturesque sites and monuments around him. His style is cold, but his drawing is correct, and there is much valuable archæological evidence on the ancient monuments of Rome to be found in his works.

Paris was not, in the sixteenth century, what she became later, a centre of attraction to all artists. Until then the provinces also had their schools of engraving, and each department, so to speak, could cite some honourable name. Orleans, amongst others, could pride herself on having produced the engraver Etienne Delaune. He was certainly one of the most prolific of the clever engravers of the French Renaissance. His style gives evident proof that he had studied a goldsmith's trade. This accounts for his love of small works. He did produce two or three large engravings, after compositions by Jean Cousin; but he was not nearly so much at his ease in this style. When left to himself, or when he engraved his son's designs, he managed to produce complicated compositions in very small spaces, and yet, with so much

exactness, that each person and object is admirably proportioned and could not be better placed. In engraving he first drew a general outline, and moulded it into shape with little dots, now and then heightened with strokes—a usual practice with goldsmiths who had to finish off every portion of their plates with minute and loving care, as they were submitted to the direct gaze of the public. Numerous ornaments, some elegant arabesques, some pieces of jewelry, and two rare engravings of the interior of a goldsmith's studio, complete the works of the engraver of Orleans, and justify the esteem in which he is held.

Jean Chartier and Pierre Vallet were born and worked at Orleans. The former executed, with a certain harshness, about ten engravings of allegorical figures—'Force,' 'Abundance,' 'Justice,' &c. The drawing shows that the artist had kept pace with the progress made in France in his age, but the engraving has fallen far short of the designer's intention, and is miserably poor.

Pierre Vallet was much more skilful. He etched the celebrated map of Paris, prepared by François Quesnel, with ease combined with exactness. He was an equally true interpreter of the human countenance, as proved by his own portrait and that of the botanist, Jean Robin; and in his engravings of the romance of 'Théagène' and 'Chariclée,' he has shown that he could also cleverly render the designs of others.

Joseph Boillot was a native of Langres. He has

left two works of totally different styles ; in his 'Livre des Termes,' the engraving is heavy and the plate is overloaded with useless strokes ; but in another of his books, 'l'Art Militaire' (1598), on the contrary, his work is picturesque, harmonious, and easy, without being incorrect.

Pierre Sablon etched his own portrait at Chartres, and has taken care to tell us to what we are indebted for his likeness in the following lines :—

> "Me contemplant un jour en deux diverses glaces
> Je veis le mien profil despeinct naïvement
> Lors je déliberé en moy soudainement
> De graver ce pourtraict dont vous voyez les traces."

At Bourges, Jean Bouchier, a very clever artist, but of little celebrity, whose works show real talent, engraved six plates with so much elegance and grace, that we think he must have taken his inspiration from the school of Parma. His best work represents the 'Virgin Standing with the Infant Jesus in her arms, who is holding up his mouth to kiss her.' The divine Child's action, stretching up to reach his mother's face, is prettily conceived, and the artist has most happily rendered the mother's joy in finding herself thus beloved. Jean Bouchier's engravings are distinguished rather for correctness of drawing and justice of expression than for practical ability, for the execution is unskilful, and shows that the artist had not studied the process. Other provincial engravers worthy of notice might be named, but it is not

desirable to pursue this inquiry further ; by naming a few we have sufficiently indicated the state of the art of engraving in France in the sixteenth century.

Paris, too, had her share ; indeed, she was the centre in which the engravers of greatest talent met together. Pierre Biard executed an extensive series of original engravings in a picturesque style ; but he succeeded better when he followed the designs of others ; and two copies—'The Slave,' after Michael Angelo, and 'Venus jealous of Psyche urging Love to avenge her wrongs,' after Giulio Romano—although rather too freely rendered, give a more favourable idea of his talent than all his other works.

In some engravings which adorn the 'Ballet Comique de la Royne faict aux nopces de Monsieur le Duc de Joyeuse et de Madamoyselle de Vaudemont' (Paris, 1582, in 4to), Jacques Patin gave proof of considerable talent ; the drawing of the large figures might be better, but the finely-executed engraving, as a rule, deserves all praise.

Side by side with these artists arose a group of engravers who were content to reproduce the works of others, probably because they themselves lacked all power of invention. There being no well-organised school of painting in France, although many of their neighbours possessed an almost embarrassing number, some sought their models in Flanders, some in Italy. Charles Mallery, Pierre Firens, and Jean Baptiste Barbé took their inspiration from the works of Wierix,

and did not fail to imitate his feeble style of interpreting nature. Like their patrons, they succeeded better with portraits than with religious subjects. The latter, indeed, are executed with wearisome monotony, everything is worked out with equal care, and the art of bringing the interesting parts into relief is altogether wanting. Philip Thomassin, Valerien Regnart, and other Frenchmen of the same period, turned to Italy; but instead of studying the masterpieces of Marc-Antonio and his pupils, they addressed themselves to Cornelius Cort, a Flemish artist established at Rome, and tried to imitate his pompous and insipid style. By this strange fancy they gained nothing and sacrificed their own originality. Their harsh engravings of these compositions of questionable taste could give them but a very inferior position as artists.

The engravers of whom we have been speaking were indifferent to the school of Fontainebleau, to which Francis I. had attracted experienced masters from all countries. It was otherwise with those who are now to occupy us. Italians, French, and Flemish, while breathing the same air, seem to have forgotten their own nationality, or rather their works were combinations of the styles peculiar to each country.

Two Italian masters, Rosso and Primaticcio, directed the school. They were both highly gifted, and their works taught better lessons than any amount of the best theoretic instruction could have given. While

architects enlarged the king's favourite palace, artists assembled in France covered the walls with immense frescoes, which supplied engravers with innumerable subjects.

Among the best engravers of the school of Fontainebleau whose names are preserved to us we must name Antonio Fantuzzi, Léonard Tiry, René Boyvin, and Guido Ruggieri. They left many works signed in full, or with a monogram, and worked under the supervision of Rosso or Primaticcio. This accounts for the marvellous exactness with which they copied the almost exaggerated grace and elegance of some of these masters' paintings. Antonio Fantuzzi, sometimes called Maître Fantose in France, was the most talented of the engravers of the school. He seemed born to copy the designs of Primaticcio. In the 'Parnassus,' a composition full of figures, he succeeded by the nicety of his work in giving to each group, to each figure, its true distinctness and its true proportions. In an equally complicated composition representing 'Jupiter sending Juno, Venus, and Minerva to Paris,' he heightened his etching with some strokes of the graver, which relieve the work without injuring the harmony of the engraving; but when he used the graver only, as in the 'Grottoes of Fontainebleau,' signed in full, 'Ant. Fantuz. J. D. Bologna fecit an. D. MD. 45,' he was evidently fettered by the limited capabilities of his tools, and his work is cold compared with his etchings.

Léonard Tiry, a Fleming by birth, who passed part of his life in Italy, and came to France when his talent was developed, was the most prolific of the engravers of Fontainebleau. He was a true artist ; his etchings are easy, and his line engravings so free that we forget the process employed. He rendered the works of Rosso and Primaticcio with perfect fidelity, and with such facility that he seemed to be working out his own ideas, rather than compelled to follow the designs of others. His landscapes show a strange mixture of the styles of the countries he had successively inhabited. His architecture proves his visit to Italy, his costumes his sojourn in France, and the general appearance of his engravings, the slim, jagged, abrupt strokes, tell plainly that he lived in that country whose scenery has been rendered with such marvellous exactness by Francis Hogenberg. Vasari not unreasonably conjectures that Léonard Tiry (called by some historians of engraving, Léon Daven), was formerly a painter, and had worked with Rosso, which would account for the engraver's great ability.

René Boyvin was born at Angers. Nothing is known of his life, of the date of his birth, or the name of his master. But we are aware, and this, perhaps, is all that is necessary, that he was a very skilful engraver and a zealous admirer of the painters of Fontainebleau. He employed the graver only, and this instrument, so difficult to manage, became lissome and graceful in his hand, producing excellent results.

Boyvin's numerous engravings after Rosso, Primaticcio, and Lucas Penni, show profound respect for the talent of those masters, and prove that line-engraving under a clever artist is as well fitted to render complicated subjects as etching. The series called the 'History of Jason,' after Rosso, speak well for René Boyvin's powers. Each small subject is enclosed in a different border, showing the painter's fertile imagination and the engraver's ease of handling the burin. Guido Ruggieri followed Rosso and Primaticcio when in France; he, too, used the graver, and succeeded in rendering with it the works of the masters whom he took as models. His productions are not numerous, but they are such as to justify the favour in which he is held.

Léonard Limousin, the celebrated enameller, produced a few engravings only, which were mere specimens of patterns to be reproduced in enamel. They were original, and their style resembles that of the school of Fontainebleau. Four plates with his initials, dated 1544, are of subjects from the New Testament; they are rather harsh, but the handling is clear, bold, and free. The compositions, too, are happily conceived; the drawing is firm, correct, and powerful. The outlines merely of the figures are given, the artist reserving the rest of the work for a process which he understood better.

Geoffroy Dumonstier, a member of a celebrated family of painters in France, produced some vigorous

etchings of an ultra-picturesque style. His slender figures of the Virgin or the Shepherds adoring the infant Jesus are exggerations of Rosso's favourite forms (we may remark that the painter-engraver treated this subject five times), the distribution of the light, which is concentrated on the Divine Infant, is all that redeems the work of Dumonstier, who owes his reputation to his name rather than to his productions.

Jacques Prévost, born at Gray, has left a portrait of Francis I., which is full of life and character. He has copied the toothless mouth of the old monarch with an exactness which must have been displeasing to the king and his courtiers; but it is attractive to those who value correctness of drawing and persevering pursuit of truth, as it proves that the artist of Franche Comté thought more of these than of Court favour.

We will merely mention the existence of the numerous anonymous engravings inspired by the artists of Fontainebleau; any discussion of their merits would delay us too long. Their authors are known under the collective name of the anonymous engravers of the school of Fontainebleau.

Engraving only played a secondary part in the general movement of art at this period. It served to multiply and spread abroad the works of the school, but it was not appreciated at the time; not until age and successive mutilations had injured the palace of Fontainebleau was its real usefulness apparent. En-

gravings alone remain to prove how much talent was employed during the Renaissance. But for Jacques Androuet du Cerceau's collection of engravings in his book on the 'Best Buildings of France,' we should know nothing of a number of castles now destroyed, or of the precious monuments which rose up on every side in every corner of France in the sixteenth century. Without the engravers named above, we should know none of Primaticcio's works. Time and the hand of man have destroyed or damaged the admirable paintings by the Florentine artist on the walls of Francis I.'s palace ; and it would be a great honour for the engravers of this famous school if they had done nothing but preserve the remembrance of it. But they have another title to glory no less honourable. They gave an impulse to French artists which no fellow-countrymen would have done ; and we must remember that we have to thank the gallant engravers of Fontainebleau, in a great measure, for that school which was subsequently founded with such unequalled success by the engravers of France.

While prolific and untiring decorators were vieing with each other in covering the walls of Fontainebleau with scenes from mythology in a style which combined that of the Italian, Flemish, and French schools, an art entirely national was coming into fashion at Court, and spreading throughout France. We allude to portrait-painting. We know that the beautiful series of portraits produced in the sixteenth century

are said to be traceable to Flanders, and that John Van Eyck and Hans Memling have been named as the sponsors of this art in France. But without any intention of detracting from the merits of the portraits by these Flemings, we must assert that the style of the French artists differs entirely from theirs. Van Eyck and Memling painted every portion of the human form, even the smallest details, with great care; the French, on the contrary, give the general outline, care nothing for details, and think only of rendering the human face with all its spirit, life, character, and individuality. Little do they care for the processes employed, or for the complete sacrifice of their own personality. The crayons ascribed to Clouet, Quesnel, and Dumontier are admirable. Their simplicity is marvellous; it is difficult to say how they are done; the paper is scarcely covered, the tones are blended with incomparable perfection, the detail of the work escapes us; they seem to have been produced by a breath, a breath fixing the life and expression of the face, which, after the lapse of three centuries, has lost nothing of its freshness or of its grace.

Engraving could not entirely master the difficulties of such works; the genius of the artists who practised it was powerless before the striking truth of these life-like portraits. Obliged to give outline and shading in strokes, the artist could, indeed, render the style of the drawing and the appearance of the face, but to

give the harmonious aspect of the originals was beyond his powers. Jean Rabel, Thomas de Leu, Léonard Gualtier, Pierre Daret, Claude Mellan, and Michel Lasne, the best artists, interpreted the designs entrusted to them, each in his own way, with great practical ability and knowledge of drawing. But they never really transferred to metal the exquisite charm of these unrivalled crayon drawings. Jean Rabel's engravings prove that he was himself a painter and skilful designer; he excelled in rendering the face and character of all his models. He has given us natural portraits of Remi Belleau, Antoine Muret, the president De Thou, and the chancellor De l'Hôpital; they are like what history leads us to believe, we feel in looking at them that Rabel has left us true and favourable likenesses. Although his engraving is somewhat timid and inexperienced, it faithfully renders the design, and never shows awkwardness or want of knowledge of drawing. Thomas de Leu never surpassed Jean Rabel, although he was a far more skilful engraver. His ability only injured his drawing by making it laboured. We must thank him for putting the names of those from whom he took his models under many of his plates. This precaution establishes the anthenticity of great masters' works, and rescues many artists from oblivion. Isaïe Fournier, James Blamé, Jacob Bunel, Darlay, G. Guibert, Quesnel, Daniel and Pierre Dumonstier, are indebted to him for all or part of their fame.

The chief merit of Thomas de Leu was the faithfulness with which he copied the painter's work. It is difficult to choose amongst the many portraits engraved by Thomas de Leu. The skill is about the same in all, there are few faults in the work; his portraits all show great knowledge of physiognomy and correctness of drawing. His likenesses of Pierre de Brach, Barnabé Brisson, of Gabrielle D'Estrées, or of Antoine Caron, are of equal merit; the delicacy of the expression and the clearness of the engraving is the same in all. At first Thomas de Leu was influenced by the pompous compositions and monotonous engravings of Wierix; he profited, it is true, by his excellent portraits, but copied his faults as well as his good points. Fortunately, he soon turned from ascetic subjects to nature, and when he addressed himself, either directly or through masters, to the human figure, he brought out works far superior to his cold engravings after poor compositions without beauty or grandeur.

Léonard Gualtier, who engraved about an equal number of vignettes and portraits, was the contemporary of Thomas de Leu, and we may almost say his rival. Being neighbours, the two artists often took the same persons' portraits. Their styles were different. Léonard Gualtier's work was less condensed than that of Thomas de Leu; his strokes were deeper and wider apart; he caught a likeness equally well, but his portraits were harsher and less pleasing than those of Leu.

Briot, Jean Picard, and Jaspar Isac, who imitated the style of Thomas de Leu and of Léonard Gualtier, tried, but without success, to reproduce the works of the skilful crayon designers of the sixteenth century. Their drawing was poor, and their engraving unpardonably dull. The faces of the figures hardly stand out from the copper, so harsh and inadequate is the engraving. Jacques de Fornazeris, who may be the same as Isaïe Fournier, after whom Thomas de Leu engraved, recalls the style of the master more than any contemporary. He has reproduced some French designs of the sixteenth century with delicacy and sufficient exactness; and engraved a good many vignettes. Finally, Jacques Granthomme and Charles Mallery were too anxious to imitate Flemish works to be included in the French school. Their works resemble the engravings of Wierix, and never have any attempt at individuality.

To continue this uninterrupted list of portrait-takers who are such an honour to the French school, we must pass on to the seventeenth century, and consider Pierre Daret, Claude Mellan, and Michel Lasne, of whom we have before spoken, and who were under Louis XIII. what Thomas de Leu and Léonard Gualtier had been under Henry IV. Few persons of any celebrity or importance escaped these experienced artists. Unfortunately, although they drew well, their style of engraving was very unpleasing. Pierre Daret, whose work with the graver was generally cold and

Fig 24.— Head of Christ. Engraved by CLAUDE MELLAN.

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monotonous, yet managed to reproduce very fairly the Abbé of Saint Ciran, after Daniel Dumonstier. Claude Mellan, who rather paraded his skill in drawing a full-faced head of Christ with one unbroken stroke of the tool, showed a happier taste in the portrait of Peiresc and in some female faces after his own crayons. Our attention is unfortunately called from the good drawing to the wide and often monotonous lines of the execution.

After his earliest engravings it is easy to see that Michel Lasne for a time turned to foreign models instead of being content with those close at hand. This was a pity; François Villamène and the Sadelers exercised an unfortunate influence over him; and it was not until late in life that he with difficulty freed himself from it, and asserted his own independence. It was about 1630—his first engraving bears date 1617—that he adopted his subdued style of cross-hatching and working out the face which gained him so high a position in the French school. The portraits which belong to this new period, of Pierre Séguier and Pierre de Marcassus after D. Dumonstier, of Strozzi after Simon Vouet, of Brunyer and Evrard Jabach after Vandyck, are remarkable for a firmness of handling and knowledge of physiognomy rare amongst French artists. Honesty of interpretation has not excluded from the engraving life, likeness, or individuality. Unfortunately, at the end of his career, Michel Lasne swerved from the right path. He was

jealous of the success of Claude Mellan, determined to imitate him, and proceeded to make his strokes as wide apart as possible, and, to use an authorized expression, he manœuvred so much, that he sacrificed correct drawing to the useless display of his knowledge. In this mistaken endeavour, he lost his best characteristic, the simplicity, not without energy, with which he had formerly interpreted the character and physiognomy of his portraits.

The artists whom we have been considering were most successful with portraits, but they have nevertheless left some works in other styles which deserve mention. They were not indifferent to passing events, and took care to depict the most important of them; besides the wood-cuts of Perissim and Tortorel, we know of some historical engravings—by which we understand engravings of battles, victories, or any actions of a people or a sovereign—signed by Thomas de Leu, Leonard Gualtier, or Pierre Firens. 'The Consecration of Louis XIII. in the Cathedral of Rheims,' 'The Consecration of Marie de Medicis,' 'Henri IV. laying hands on those afflicted with the King's Evil,' and a good many unsigned engravings of the same kind are of real skill and rare correctness; and in addition to the interest which always attaches to a contemporary representation of an historical event, they are of value on account of their artistic composition and practical ability.

Up to this period we have not found France taking

the initiative in the art of engraving. Even when in the hands of the best masters, French art had hitherto remained under Flemish, Italian, or other foreign influence. But with the reign of Louis XIII. a new era commenced for her; it was then her turn to take the lead, and to give both lessons and masters to foreign countries. Artists anxious to complete their education, or to establish their reputation, hurried to France from every side. She developed talents and gave lustre to reputations already acquired. Her influence on art itself was ever on the increase, and even now fresh successes are constantly proving that she still retains the pre-eminence she then attained.

Jacques Callot, born in Lorraine, was influenced by no one. His genius was thoroughly French, his style entirely original, and he therefore occupies an exceptional position in the history of art. His life was strange and worth relating. He was born at Nancy, in 1592; at twelve years old he set off secretly for Rome with a band of gypsies, but being recognised on the road by a merchant of Nancy, he was brought back to his family and remained some time in his native town. He again tried to escape, and was again brought back by his elder brother, who met him in a street of Turin. This perseverance convinced his parents that resistance was useless, and they decided to yield to his inclinations, and to send their young son to Rome, a favourable opportunity presenting itself. This soon occurred. In 1609 an ambassador,

accredited to the Pope by Henry II., of Lorraine, was willing to take charge of Jacques Callot, who had already given proof of exceptional ability in a few engravings. His stay in Rome decided his fate. When in the Eternal City he is said to have at first followed the lessons of Ant. Tempesta, probably with his fellow countrymen, Israël Henriet and Claude Deruet, who arrived before him. If he did join this studio he could not have remained there long, for we find no trace of the lessons he received in it, and the best informed biographers say that Philippe Thomassin, a French engraver who had been established in Rome for many years before Callot's arrival, was his first master. Callot began with the study of line engraving. In this style he executed several plates, which show the influence and recall the manner of Thomassin ; but as soon as he became master of the process and was left to himself, he threw off this control and acquired the entirely original style which he never again lost. Callot remained for some time at Florence, and was noticed by Cosmo II. de Medici, who retained him near him and entrusted him with the engraving of 'The Funeral of the Queen of Spain.' He acquitted himself creditably of this commission, and this first important work gave him considerable reputation, which was increased and established by a successful invention. He wished to give up line engraving, and find some mode of working better suited to his prolific and ingenious spirit, to his ardent and

vivid imagination. Etching had, it is true, been already practised by Albert Dürer, Parmigiano, and a few other artists, but the process they employed was inferior and uncertain. Callot set himself to work to bring it to perfection. He spread a thick coat of varnish on a moderately heated plate, thereby obtaining a uniformly even surface, upon which he could draw as with a pen on paper. His genius did the rest. He entirely discarded the graver, never again to use anything but the needle; he executed several engravings of this kind at Florence, and returned to Lorraine in 1622, preceded by a brilliant reputation. He then engraved two series of twelve compositions, called 'The Aristocracy' (*La Noblesse*), and 'The People' (*Les Gueux*), in which were displayed all his great genius, all the spirit and unprecedented power of his needle. He came to Paris in 1629, and there again met his fellow-countryman Israël Henriet, who was a trader in engravings, and, like almost all merchants of the kind at that time, an engraver also. In Paris he began a charming portrait of a celebrated collector of engravings, Charles Delorme, which he completed the next year at Nancy.

In 1633, on the entry of Louis XIII. into the chief city of Lorraine, our engraver attracted notice by his proud and noble patriotism. The king, having heard of the artist's talent, proposed to Callot that he should engrave the siege of Nancy. He refused without hesitation, and his answer to the king has been trans-

mitted to us by Félibien in his own words: "Sire, I am a native of Lorraine, and I think I ought to do nothing against the honour of my prince and my country." He testified his horror of war in a still more decided manner in his series of fine and sarcastic original engravings known as 'The Miseries of War.' In eighteen compositions, all most picturesque, he depicted the unheard-of sufferings, the fearful tortures his fellow-countrymen had been made to endure throughout the struggle. Two years later, on the 24th of March, 1635, after a long illness, during which he produced several engravings, Jacques Callot died, leaving no children. His wife's name was Catherine Puttinger. A tomb worthy of his memory was raised in his native town, and another etcher, Abraham Bosse, of less inventive power, perhaps, but able to go on with the master's work, has left us an engraving of this mausoleum, which has the following inscription in the centre: "A la Postérité. Passant jette les yeux sur cette escriture, quand tu sçauras de combien mon voyage a esté advancé, tu ne seras pas marri que ie retarde un peu le tien: Je suis Jacques Calot, ce grand et excellent calcographe, qui repose en ce lieu en attandant la résurrection des corps. Ma naissance fut médiocre, ma condition noble, ma vie courte et heureuse; mais ma renommée a esté et sera sans pareille; personne ne m'a esté esgal en toute sorte de perfection pour le dessein et la graveure sur l'airain. Toute la terre a consenti aux louanges ex-

Fig. 25.—Portrait of CLAUDE DERUET. Etching by JACQUES CALLOT.

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traordinaires qui men ont esté données sans que pour cela je sois jamais sorti de ma modestie naturelle. Je nasquis à Nancy, l'année 1594, et mourus aussi à Nancy le 23^{e} Mars 1635, au regret incroyable de la Lorraine, ma patrie, et de tous les plus rares esprits de notre siècle, et principalement de damoiselle Catherine Puttinger, mon espouse qui pour un dernier témoignage d'amitié m'a faict dresser ce tombeau. Prie Dieu pour celuy qui ne te priera jamais de rien et passe."

Abraham Bosse was born and worked at the same time as Jacques Callot, but his career was much longer. He is one of the most interesting of French artists. His numerous works give most authentic historical information on the costumes and manners of the time of Louis XIII. His works on engraving and architecture show an erudition rare amongst artists, and give us information on the state of art at a time when treatises by the trading classes were certainly not common. His engravings have a charm all their own, independent of the subject represented. We must, however, make one reservation in our favourable notice. Although in his 'Treatise on Engraving' Abraham Bosse testifies the truest respect for Callot's invention, he unfortunately did not follow the example of that master. Instead of merely using the needle on copper, like a pen on paper, he too often tried to imitate the strokes of the graver; in spite of this, however, his drawing was always spirited, and

his compositions were generally well arranged. In his charming series of costumes engraved after the designs of the witty artist of Normandy, Jean de Saint-Igny, who himself engraved a few plates, Bosse has proved that it was from choice, not from incompetency, that he had recourse to the graver; and the freely-executed plates of these two series should be reckoned among his best works.

Like most really original artists, Jacques Callot had no immediate pupils, properly so called. His manner was attractive to a great many artists, but not one took direct lessons from the Lorraine master. Claude Deruet alone may have received advice from him; but he was a painter, and only engraved three plates, which show the influence, but scarcely the actual intervention, of Callot. Nicolas Cochin, the elder, engraved the backgrounds of their compositions for different engravers, and evidently wished to imitate in them the manner of Callot, but he did not attain to anything like the same delicacy of handling. Stefano della Bella, although born at Florence and educated in Italy, was far more influenced by the engravings of the Lorraine master executed in Florence, than by the more majestic works of his fellow-countrymen. His works, prettily conceived and delicately executed, are all of small subjects; and when we say that they remind us of Jacques Callot, we are giving them the highest praise.

Sebastian Leclerc flourished later; he was born at

Fig. 26.—Sunrise. Etching by CLAUDE LORRAINE.

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Metz on the 26th of September, 1637, and died in Paris on the 25th of October, 1714. He nevertheless preserved the remembrance of Callot, and in his small original engravings of costumes he often reminds us of the master whom France so justly counts among her most illustrious children.

Lorraine gave birth to another of the most celebrated engravers of the seventeenth century. He was a painter, and only used the needle occasionally; but when he did employ it he produced masterpieces. Claude Gellée, better known as Claude Lorraine, produced some etchings which have all the qualities of his paintings. He distributed the light and diffused the air in his landscapes with unrivalled success. His two chief engravings, the 'Sunrise,' and the 'Cowherd,' are excellent models for modern etchers of landscapes. With the same easy grace his needle has rendered the lucid water, the solid buildings, the leaves quivering in the wind; the air seems to pervade everything; the artist engraved as he would have painted without caring about correct strokes and neat outlines. He softens the tones before him whilst faithfully rendering them, he takes his inspiration direct from nature, and his poetic spirit does the rest. At no time has landscape been treated with such majesty, grace, and bold simplicity; and whether he be considered as a painter or as an engraver Claude Lorraine is undoubtedly the greatest interpreter of nature the world has ever produced.

Claude Gellée stands alone in the French school. The few imitators he had remained far behind their master. Attention was called in another direction, and engravers preferred to reproduce the works of Simon Vouet, a figure painter, who was then much sought after. When young, this artist had travelled a great deal in England, Turkey, and Italy, and on his return to France he soon became so famous, that his reputation spread to the court, and Louis XIII. wished to receive lessons in drawing from a master of such renown. We can imagine how much this honour added to the painter's popularity. Orders flowed into Vouet's studio from all sides. All the great nobles were anxious to possess paintings by him, or wished him to decorate their palaces and reception-rooms. Engravers, always attracted by a painter's success, hastened to multiply his works. Simon Vouet himself did not scorn the needle, he etched two plates, 'David and Goliath' and 'The Virgin and the Infant Jesus, to whom St. Joseph is presenting a bird,' which we must own cannot have contributed much to his renown. However, if he himself produced few engravings, the husbands of his two daughters, Michel Dorigny and François Tortebat, seemed to have devoted their existence to spreading the renown of their father-in-law. Of these two painter-engravers, Michel Dorigny was by far the more skilful; his easy and sometimes bold needle rendered the limpid colouring and the occasionally incorrect drawing of Simon Vouet

with remarkable fidelity. He represented almost all the important compositions of the painter with scrupulous exactness ; indeed, so great was Simon Vouet's influence over his son-in-law, that Dorigny's original paintings were mere fac-similes of his. Tortebat's style was more decided—less docile and less plastic. His needle was heavy, his engravings almost without charm. His first signed prints bear date 1664, his last 1668. He evidently soon gave up engraving to devote himself entirely to painting.

François Perrier, Pierre Daret, Michel Lasne, and Claude Mellan also belonged to the school of Vouet and were influenced by him. Each one, however, had his own peculiar style of engraving. François Perrier, whose best piece is the portrait of Simon Vouet, was a painter also. His other numerous engravings are often poor, and fail to render the softness of the paintings of the French school at the beginning of the sixteenth century. We have already spoken of Daret, Lasne, and Mellan, amongst the engravers of crayons. We shall not review them again ; the blame or praise already awarded applies equally to their line-engravings after Vouet or his imitators. We merely state that we consider the esteem in which the works of these engravers are held is somewhat exaggerated. Laurent de la Hyre and François Chauveau did not resist the influence of the all-powerful master, but they freed themselves in a measure from the yoke which oppressed the French school, and showed their inde-

pendence in some engravings of exaggerated elegance, which remind us of the school of Fontainebleau. They both employed etching; Laurent de la Hyre used almost too fine and thin a needle, and Chauveau cut into the copper rather too vigorously. He wasted his powers also in working for publishers who were anxious to profit by his proficiency, which was really great, and who cared more that he should produce many works, than good ones requiring care and reflection.

Whilst engraving in Paris was assuming a new and independent style, a similar movement was going on in the provinces. On all sides French engravers arose who were decidedly original, although their drawing was not very pure or their ideas on art very refined. At Tours, Claude Vignon engraved a considerable number of plates, the etching of which is beautiful in spite of the inferior taste and style. At Nancy, Jacques Bellange carried exaggeration of style to its utmost limits, but his manner of engraving was very easy and agreeable. At Mantes, Pierre Brebiette produced some light and spirited engravings; at Toulouse, the painter and poet Hilaire Pader drew some original designs on copper, and published a translation of the 'Treatise on the Proportions of the Human Body,' by Giovanni Pablo Lomazzo, and a strange book called 'The enigmatical Dream of the Speaking Picture' (*Le Songe énigmatique de la Peinture Parlante.*) At Châteaudun, Nicolas Chapron transferred to metal some designs he had executed in Rome after the

paintings of Raphael in the *loggie* of the Vatican, he appears to have understood these great works better than any artist who has, as yet, arisen; at Arles, Nicolas Delafage engraved in a style somewhat like that of Italy in the seventeenth century; his figures of the Virgin are skilfully executed, but they are not very remarkable. Indeed we might find one or two artists in almost every province who successfully employed engraving which had now become acclimatised in France.

But all this provincial enthusiasm was not enough. Art requires a higher education than all France could give to achieve any great success; and, therefore, artists who had their reputation at heart flocked to Italy, the great and inexhaustible centre of the arts, to study at Rome those masterpieces of antiquity and of the Renaissance, which remained to testify to her former grandeur.

The greater number of these artists remained some years in Rome, others established themselves there permanently; among the latter was the immortal Nicolas Poussin, the greatest artist France has ever produced. As a painter he does not come within the range of our criticism but his distinguishing qualities have been rendered with such fidelity by some engravers that we may form a really just idea of his talent by examining plates after his celebrated compositions; and this we think is not the case with any other master. It is because the beauty of his works consists in the

arrangement and style of his figures, in the grandeur of the lines, and the expression of the faces and gestures rather than in the composition or the colouring. We are aware that the master used a red preparation for his canvases, which from the first injured his colours, and gave them the sober, gloomy, sad appearance which they still retain; the engraver had not to contend with the different tints, as he could but express general harmony by means of black and white, and he has, therefore, transmitted the master's compositions to us with all their spirit and feeling, without the unfortunate obscurity which often prevents our grasping the meaning of the originals all at once. Jean Pesne devoted himself to the reproduction of Poussin's works, rendering to the French master the same good service that Marc-Antonio did to Raphael, with the difference that he worked from paintings, and the engraver of Bologna from drawing, only. Jean Pesne worked with docility under the eyes of the master, and was well instructed in all the resources of engraving. He obtained excellent results by means of etching alone. His style is bold and sure, never pedantic or laboured; he was as much at his ease on copper as on paper, proving afresh that it is necessary to excel in drawing before excelling in engraving. To Pesne we are indebted for rendering Poussin's works in all their majestic beauty. He was equally successful with subjects of every variety. He is never inferior to his model, whether he is engraving the

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Fig. 27.—Time disclosing Truth. Engraved by G. AUDRAN, after Nicolas POUSSIN.

'Seven Sacraments,' the 'Trance of St. Paul,' or the 'Triumph of Galatea.' He pays untiring attention to the correctness of the figures or objects, and gives us a faithful copy of the painting before him, thinking far more of exactly rendering the master's work than of parading his own manual skill.

How rare are these conscientious copies! how few instances of them are furnished by history! Nicolas Poussin was one of those painters who best inspired engravers.

Gérard Audran, the most skilful draughtsman of the French school, and evidently a master of drawing, engraved the best work of Nicolas Poussin, which may perhaps also be considered a wonder of engraving. 'Time disclosing Truth' is a magnificent composition in which the painter put forth all his powers to prove the injustice of his contemporaries towards him, and it found an admirable interpreter in Gérard Audran. "Using by turns the needle and the graving-tool, he seems," says M. Denon, "to have employed these two instruments to supplement each other like the different tints under a painter's brush." The work is in fact so beautifully blended together, that in looking at it we see the composition only, and forget until we examine it closely that the engraver's skill must almost have equalled that of the painter, for him to have rendered so faithfully the work he had undertaken. Although Gérard Audran only occasionally placed his talent at the service of Nicolas Poussin, and produced very few

engravings after that master, he must still be classed with Jean Pesne, and a female artist, of whom we shall presently speak, amongst the chief of the engravers who took their inspiration from Poussin's works.

Claudine Stella, niece of the painter, Jacques Stella, was born at Lyons in 1634, and died at Paris in 1697. It is rare to find a woman, even among the most highly gifted, with sufficient strength of mind to identify herself entirely with work of an exalted kind, more especially when that work requires an extended education and a knowledge of the human mind such as in our present state of civilisation is usually monopolised by man. The genius of Poussin was of a masculine type, and therefore Claudine Stella's engravings after his works may be considered the more extraordinary. Indeed, they show great knowledge of drawing, and positively manly energy, and the execution is so easy that Wattelet has not hesitated to say, "No man understood Poussin's true character as did Claudine Stella." This statement appears to us exaggerated, because we know the engravings of J. Pesne and Gérard Audran; it is, however, partly justified by the 'Striking of the Rock,' after a picture which once formed part 'ex Musæo Anth. Stella, Parisiis.' This plate, reproducing one of Poussin's most important compositions, interprets the painting as faithfully as possible. The sad expression of the weary longing to quench their thirst, the joyful looks of those who feel their spirit returning to them, are rendered with sur-

prising exactness; and, but that the work in the first proof was rather too metallic, we should unreservedly agree with Wattelet that "Claudine Stella excelled all engravers in rendering Poussin's colouring."

We have now named the chief engravers after Poussin, but we should not be doing justice to his influence on the French school if we confined our notice to works inspired directly by his compositions. His pictures have never ceased to guide artists in search of beauty and grandeur of style, and even now many an excellent engraving takes its inspiration from Poussin's works. Giovanni Dughet, Poussin's brother-in-law, engraved his compositions, of which works the best is the 'Assumption of the Virgin.' The Chevalier Avice, of noble birth and an artist by choice, showed talent in his engraving of the 'Adoration of the Magi' after the painting in the Museum of the Louvre, and in a 'Group of Cupids playing on the borders of a forest,' 'The Martyrdom of St. Bartholomew,' engraved by Jean Couvay, shows more skill in handling the graver than in interpreting Poussin; 'The Baptism of Christ' by Louis de Chatillon happily renders the appearance of the picture. Gerard Edelinck, whose works are generally worthy of all praise, and who was usually most skilful, failed to obtain his ordinary success in his engraving of the 'Annunciation;' finally, Etienne Gantrel, Jean Lenfant, Etienne Baudet, Antoine Garnier, Michel Natalis, Jean Nolin, Pierre Van Somer, and many others often

took their inspiration from Nicolas Poussin, and were only worthy of notice when they had the good taste to follow that master. Many an engraver who cannot produce a good original plate, will execute a remarkable work with an excellent model before him.

Nicolas Poussin certainly exercised a most useful and lasting influence on the French school. Imperfect as they were, we must notice the efforts of those artists who tried to restore the art which must always conform to the eternal laws of beauty. They called Poussin's works to their aid in their endeavour to check the universal spread of bad taste and evil tendencies. Peyron thought he could not better illustrate his notions of reform than by recommending the admirable design 'The Daughters of Jethro' as a model for beginners, and an example for masters. This was but just homage to the artist who so successfully studied antiquity. It would be unjust not to refer the origin of the Renaissance, of which we are speaking, to the greatest master of the French school. Engraving also, though led astray for a time by frivolous, though often witty compositions, began to aspire to higher works; and M. Boucher-Desnoyers, to quote one amongst many contemporary engravers, has skilfully executed a plate, 'Eliezer and Rebecca,' a splendidly treated subject which will always be admired by those who understand art.

A number of second-rate artists in the beginning of the seventeenth century, whose works still deserve

mention, arose at the same time as these gifted masters, with their lofty ideal; these men devoted their talent to preserving the memory of important historical events, they copied the splendid castles of their day in order to bequeath authentic records of the dominant taste of their own age to their descendants. They are, of course, more interesting to the historian than to the artist, but are of some artistic value also on account of the information they give about their authors. If the work be badly engraved the intelligence conveyed in it is probably incorrect. If it be signed by an artist of talent it is most likely a trustworthy representation of the monument or fact depicted. We value highly the historical compositions of Crispin de Passe, Héli Dubois, Jacques Callot, and Abraham Bosse, on account of the celebrity of their authors. The last-named, of whom we have before spoken, was the most zealous of all in working at the history and manners of his time. An historian of the reign of Louis XIII. would lose much valuable information if he neglected to look carefully through the numerous works of this engraver.

It would be the same with any one who should attempt to give a history of French architecture, and ignore the engravings of Claude Chatillon, Israël Silvestre, or of Gabriel Perelle, three artists who devoted their lives to copying the royal mansions and principal castles of France. Their order of talent was different, but their works are all executed with a con-

scientiousness for which they are justly valued. Claude Chatillon's engravings of views of the 'Hôtel de Ville of Paris,' of the 'Hospital of St. Louis,' of the 'Hôtel de Nevers,' 'The Place Dauphine,' and 'The Sainte Chapelle,' show us exactly the early state of these monuments now destroyed or altered. By means of the delicate and spirited engravings of Israël Silvestre we are well acquainted with 'Rambouillet, near the Gate of St. Antoine,' the property of the father-in-law of Tallemant des Réaux, with the 'Old Chamber of the Peers,' and the 'Church and Cemetery of the Innocents at Paris;' and Gabriel Perelle, whose etching is less picturesque, but equally faithful, has preserved the memory of many lost monuments, and enabled us to fancy the original state of many grand residences, which are now either mutilated or fallen from their first estate.

Whilst engraving was falling into the hands of inferior artists, and losing its high position everywhere except in Flanders and Holland, French artists were proving themselves more original than ever, and forcing their way up to that high position from which they have never since receded. That great master, Gérard Audran, of whom we have previously spoken, was at the head of the school. He belonged to a family of artists, and learnt the first elements of his art in the paternal house. His father, Claude Audran, was but an inferior engraver, but fortunately he knew enough to guide a beginner. It was under his direction that Gérard produced his first

engravings which showed no decided taste, and gave no hint of the future works which were to come from the master's hand. A visit to Italy in early life settled his taste and expanded his mind. When he went to Rome he already knew enough of drawing to appreciate the works he saw there, and he had acquired sufficient skill in using the graver to be able at once to set to work profitably. Although he had gained admission to the studio of Carlo Maratti, he chiefly copied antique statues and the works of great masters, and we can imagine that this style of working improved him more than the lessons of his teacher.

During his stay in Rome, and whilst following the lessons of Carlo Maratti, and drawing in the galleries, Gérard Audran found time to engrave a charming portrait of Jordanus Hilling, a ceiling painted by Pietro da Cortona in the Sacchetti Palace, another ceiling by the same artist in the Pamphili Gallery, and four plates after Domenichino, 'David dancing before the Ark,' 'Judith showing the head of Holofernes to the People,' 'Esther before Ahasuerus,' and 'Solomon making Bathsheba sit upon his Throne.' As they were executed with talent these engravings drew attention in France to their author, and on his return he was at once chosen by Lebrun to engrave the series of the 'Battles of Alexander,' which the first painter of the king had just finished. Perhaps no artist had ever been more worthy of a painter's confidence. Full of earnestness and enthusiasm, Gérard

Audran set to work without delay, and at the end of six years he had accomplished this really gigantic task (1672—1678). He employed line-engraving and etching alternately, and has rendered the original paintings with such fidelity that we can still estimate them at their true value, although time has almost entirely destroyed their power and harmony. At the same time that he was transferring these celebrated compositions to metal he finished the 'Pyrrhus saved,' after Nicolas Poussin, an admirable engraving which procured for him the title of Member of the French Academy, 1674. A few years later he attained the highest rank in this illustrious society which is possible to an engraver, he was named Counsellor. But instead of abating, his activity was ever on the increase, and his talent being now fully developed all his works were masterpieces.

In addition to the engravings we have named after Poussin and Charles Lebrun, we must mention as exceptionally superior works by Gérard Audran, 'The Burning Bush,' after Raphael; 'The Martyrdom of St. Gervais and St. Protais;' 'The Aurora;' and 'The Martyrdom of St. Lawrence,' after Eustache Lesueur; 'The Plague of Egina;' 'The Cupola of the Val de Grâce;' and 'The Ceiling of the King's Chamber at Versailles,' after Pierre Mignard. A few engravings after the statues of Michel Anguier, Gaspard de Marsy, and Girardon, close our list of this indefatigable artist's excellent works. Until his death at

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Paris on the 26th of July, 1703, Gérard Audran devoted his great talent to the fine arts. We have also a treatise embellished with engravings by this master on 'The Proportions of the Human Body, after the finest Figures of Antiquity.' This work is still worthy of the honour in which it has been held since its publication (1683).

Gérard Edelinck, Robert Nanteuil, and Jean Morin, superior artists of surprising ability, worked at the same time as Gérard Audran. They addressed themselves more directly to the works of Charles Lebrun, Pierre Mignard, and Philippe de Champagne; but they did not confine themselves entirely to their paintings or designs.

Gérard Edelinck was born at Antwerp in 1640, but he became naturalised in France by spending his entire life in Paris, and by his acceptance of the title of member of the Royal Academy there, which was bestowed on him on the 6th of March, 1677. His works are of such equal merit that it is difficult to distinguish the earlier from the later engravings. However, the portrait of Madame de la Vallière, which was published by Balthasar Montcornet, a publisher of the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV., appears to us to have been one of Gérard Edelinck's first works; we are led to this conclusion both by the publisher's imprint on the engraving and also by a certain harshness of execution which the artist would not have left unaltered had his powers been

fully developed. The drawing and colouring are, nevertheless, very well rendered. We can only speak in the highest terms of the greater number of Edelinck's other engravings; it would take us too long to enumerate all his masterpieces; we will be content with naming 'The Holy Family,' after Raphael; 'The Tent of Darius,' after Lebrun; the portraits of Charles Lebrun, François Tortebat, Hyacinthe Rigaud, Paul Tallemant, John Dryden, Fagon, Martin Desjardins, and Philippe de Champagne. No artist succeeded better in truthfully rendering life or in identifying himself with the genius of others; Raphael had no more skilful interpreter, and the painters of the reign of Louis XIV. gained greater renown through Edelinck's engravings of their works than they would probably have done by their own unseconded efforts.

Robert Nanteuil, who lived near Gérard Edelinck, usually drew the designs for his own engravings. Many of his portraits have come down to us. Being a very skilful designer, he, of course, easily transferred his happy likenesses to copper. He could not give the same vivid and powerful colouring as Edelinck, but his manual dexterity was quite as great. He did not at once acquire this skill; before he produced the masterpieces which earned him a glorious name, he vacillated a long time, and tried to discover in the works of his predecessors how he could best give expression to all that he felt within him; now he employed stippling, as in the engravings of Jean

Boulanger; now, like Claude Mellan, he used single strokes with cross-hatching; at intervals again, he tried careful cross-hatching, following the outlines, like his master and fellow-countryman, Nicolas Regnesson; and at last he began to assume his own individual style, which consisted in modelling with the greatest precision every shade in the face, and employing different kinds of work for the other parts of the engraving. In this manner he engraved the portraits of Pomponne de Bellièvre, Gilles Ménage, Jean Loret, Lamothe le Vayer, of the Duchess of Nemours, of J. B. Van Steenberghen, and some twenty others, all equally perfect and admirable, which must always continue to excite the admiration of artists and men of taste.

In addition to the esteem in which Robert Nanteuil is held on account of his works, the art of engraving is truly indebted to him for the celebrated Edict of 1660, dated from St. Jean de Luz, which he obtained from Louis XIV. By this edict, engraving was declared free and distinct from the mechanical arts, amongst which it had hitherto been unjustly confounded, and engravers, delivered from thraldom, became independent. From this epoch they shared the privileges of other artists.

The engravers of whom we have just been speaking employed line-engraving exclusively, and obtained marvellous results from this inadequate process; another equally celebrated engraver, however, con-

fined himself almost entirely to etching. Jean Morin took lessons of Philippe de Champagne, and interpreted his paintings better than any of his contemporaries. He rendered the master's taste and style without sacrificing his own, and his works share the calm colouring and clearness for which the originals are distinguished. He engraved many compositions and landscapes, but he succeeded best with portraits, although he did not, like Robert Nanteuil, give most of his attention to them.

He was a devoted admirer of Anthony Vandyck, and delighted to reproduce his portraits; he partly borrowed this artist's mode of engraving, improving upon it, and modifying it to suit French taste. Having given the outline and chief characteristics of the face, he shaded the flesh with a quantity of stippling, which, being mellowed and softened by the acid, produced an excellent result; but the process employed was so difficult that Anthony Vandyck and Jean Morin are the only two artists who succeeded with it. The portraits of Cardinal Bentivoglio, the master's best work, of Antoine Vitré, of the Abbé de Richelieu, Marguerite Lemon, J. F. P. de Gondi, N. Christyn, and all the plates now so sought after of this artist, are engraved by this peculiar process. Some engravers tried to imitate Morin's style, but not one, not even Jean Alix or Nicolas de Plattemontagne, who were nearest to it, ever really succeeded in giving the combined ease and firmness which make the master's

portraits real masterpieces. They obtained counterfeits, nothing more, they missed the life-likeness which is so striking in Jean Morin's engravings.

At no other time did France possess a greater number of good engravers. Besides the chief masters, who formed the public taste, there were many of less talent, but of sufficient ability to attract the attention of amateurs and men of taste. François de Poilly, engraved the 'Vierge au Linge,' after Raphael, in a very praiseworthy manner, and a great number of portraits after French artists, which prove his knowledge of physiognomy and his refined taste. Antoine Masson carried line-engraving to the greatest perfection possible; and if technical skill were everything, he might take one of the highest positions in the history of art, but the French appreciate rather correct drawing than manual dexterity in engraving, and therefore we must class Antoine Masson amongst secondary artists, and the only work of his to be recommended is the portrait of Brisacier, which is certainly his best engraving; it is less laboured than his others, and the face and expression are much better rendered.

Peter Van Schuppen, though born at Antwerp in 1623, lived in France. He had very great ability, but produced no exceptionally good works; all his engravings are well executed, his drawing is correct, but the style is not very exalted, nor is there real originality in his works. Nicolas Pitau showed more

spirit in his portrait of Benjamin Prioli than in any other of his engravings. In this plate we detect the influence of his fellow-countryman, Gérard Edelinck, and a faint remembrance of the great school inaugurated at Antwerp under the control of Rubens; Pierre Lombard, born at Paris, also yielded to the influence of Edelinck, and learnt from him a style of colouring which suited well the portraits of the newsman of Holland, Lafond, after Henry Gascard, and those after Vandyck's beautiful works. Antoine Trouvain, born at Montdidier about 1666, followed the same direction, which he turned to good account in his admirable portrait of 'René Antoine Houasse,' which obtained him the title of Academician, and is still considered his best work. François Spierre and Jean Louis Roullet did not care sufficiently about good drawing, and often copied worthless works, so that they did not become as famous as their talent for engraving would perhaps otherwise have made them. Spierre's only justly valued work is 'The Virgin and the Infant Jesus,' after Correggio. Boullet is rescued from oblivion by his portraits of 'Sully,' and of 'The Marquis de Beringhen,' after Mignard, and that of 'Cam. Letellier,' after Largillière.

Some of the best painters of the time of Louis XIV. did not scorn to employ the needle, but they produced few works worthy of attention. We will, therefore, review them rapidly. Lebrun produced some etchings, which add nothing to his glory, and remind us of

Vouet. Sebastien Bourdon was in turn attracted by the artists of the Roman school of Parma and of Venice, and transferred numerous compositions to copper, betraying the influence which was dominant at the time; but though his style varied, his engraving remained obstinately poor and cold.

The taste in Jacques Stella's engravings is inferior to that in his paintings. The latter seemed to be inspired by the lofty ideal and the refinement of form of which such perfect examples are seen in the works of Nicolas Poussin, whilst his etchings are hastily and boldly conceived in a style not unlike that of Jacques Callot. If an authentic signature did not exclude all doubt, we could scarcely believe that 'The Ceremony of Paying Tribute to the Grand Duke of Tuscany' is from the hand which painted the beautiful series of 'The Passion,' the designs of which have been unhesitatingly attributed to Nicolas Poussin by a modern editor.

Louis de Boullongne and Michel-Ange Corneille followed the same track in engraving as in painting, and gave no proofs of originality in either. Their engravings, like their paintings, prove their great admiration for Poussin, whilst they give but a poor opinion of their own imagination or knowledge. Simon Guillain, who was one of the twelve elders of the Academy of Painting, has left but one engraving—'The Cries of Bologna,' after Annibal Caracci; and something more would be required to give him the same rank as an engraver which he holds as a painter.

A landscape painter, Francis Millet, engraved three etchings, which are now very rare, and are quite worthy of his paintings. The composition is superior, and they give a very good idea of the scenery round Rome. The artist's needle, like his brush, has admirably rendered the noble beauties of that glorious neighbourhood, which have inspired and affected so many artists. To conclude, Claude Lefèvre, a most talented portait painter, has engraved two or three compositions, which would have made him famous, even if his paintings did not exist. His own portrait, executed with a masterly ease which reminds us of Vandyck, is one of the most valuable of the engravings of the French school; indeed, we may say, one of the finest portraits ever engraved in any country.

It was during the reign of Louis XIV. that Mezzotint Engraving, invented by Louis of Siegen, was most successfully practised in France. The novelty of the discovery and the valuable results attainable by its means, attracted several French artists, who became familiar with it as readily as with every other form of art. A French artist of Flemish taste, Wallerant Vaillant, borne at Lille in 1623, produced the first really skilful mezzotint engravings under the guidance of Prince Rupert, the friend and confidant of Louis Siegen. Very few proofs were printed from them in Holland, and, judging by the time which elapsed

between their publication and the adoption of the new style by French artists, they were not known in France until much later. Isaac Sarrabat was one of the first who ventured to employ the unfamiliar process in that country, and his boldness was successful. His drawing was agreeable rather than grand, but his tints were harmonious, and he has shown more knowledge and experience than could have been expected from an artist employing a new process, in the portraits of the engraver 'Etienne Gantrel,' after Largillière; of the 'Marquis of Praslin; and of 'G. J. B. de Choiseul,' after H. Rigaud; of the printer 'Alexander Boudan;' and in 'The Adoration of the Shepherds,' after L. Herluyson. About the same time the celebrated amateur, Boyer d'Aguilles, had the greater number of the pictures in his gallery at Aix reproduced in mezzotint by a skilful engraver, Sebastien Barras, whom he retained near him. He himself aided in the work, and executed a few engravings by the same process, which show good will and a taste superior to that of most amateurs, although, which is not surprising, he had no great practical ability.

We must name a few French artists who occasionally used mezzotint, although they did not confine themselves to it. The painter André Bouys engraved his own portrait; the colouring is skilful, indeed he proved himself master of the process from the first; Jean Cossin, the author of a justly prized 'St. Agnes;' L. Bernard, who, in choosing the 'Virgin' of Cor-

reggio, showed that he understood that coloured works are better suited than others for reproduction in mezzotint, and that chiaroscuro effects are better rendered in it than delicate drawing or careful outlines; finally, Bernard Picard, a cold and monotonous engraver, who seems for once to have been carried away by the charm of colour in his portrait of Democritus, executed in 1698.

At the end of the seventeenth century we again meet with the artists we have named above, now devoting themselves to recording the events of the reign of Louis XIV. Few remarkable works were published at this time, although engraving was more widely practised than ever before, the fashion of carefully engraving immense almanacks, giving the important events of the past year in numerous medallions, was introduced into France. These immense plates in which the calendars occupied but a small space, were hastily engraved by Edelinck, Poilly, Sebastien Leclerc, and Albert Flamen, to meet the demand of the moment, and added little to the reputation of their authors. The same observation applies to the weighty theological or philosophical theses dedicated to the king or the nobles of the court by students. The argument is surmounted by a portrait or a pompous allegorical subject; and though Robert Nanteuil, François de Poilly, Pitau, or Gerard Edelinck may be the authors, these plates are beneath the reputation of the above-named artists.

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Fig. 28.--Arabesque.—Designed and engraved by JEAN LEPAUTRE.

In the reign of Louis XIV. numerous monuments were raised testifying to the fertile imagination and the science of the artists employed by that ostentatious monarch. Jean Marot, an engraver, has left for the benefit of posterity a representation of the greater number of the buildings he saw erected. Thanks to his intelligent care, we can easily give an account of monuments now destroyed, and write the history of French architecture in the 17th century. What Jean Marot did for architecture Jean Lepautre, Jean Berain, and Daniel Marot did for the decoration of interiors. These three artists, who were equally skilful in different styles, have left a number of engravings which are complete and authentic records of the ornamentation of apartments in their day. The abundant and graceful arabesques which have escaped destruction in the Palace of Versailles or the splendid mansions of France are met with again in innumerable spirited engravings by Lepautre, and bold and careful designs by Berain and Daniel Marot.

During all the first half of the eighteenth century, engravers were almost entirely occupied in rendering the works of one artist, Antoine Watteau, the painter of festive gatherings and rural picnics. He was a colourist after Rubens. No doubt his style was very different to that of his favourite master, but he never lost sight of, he never ceased to admire, the splendid and attractive colouring of the master of the Medicean Gallery. Rubens treated grand and stately

subjects, Watteau only painted familiar scenes; but he had exceptional talent for decoration, he inaugurated a new style, and in a great measure realised the ideal he had conceived; and all this entitles this industrious and pleasing painter to the title of master. He was not content with transferring the delightful inventions of his fertile genius to canvas, he has left some rare etchings, which are as spirited and delicate as his paintings. He was very much sought after; all his contemporaries, and even his rival François Boucher, vied with each other in their eagerness to reproduce his compositions on metal with all their elegance and exceptional delicacy. The influence of the school which was raised to honour by Gérard Audran's excellent works was then at its greatest height. Antoine Watteau was therefore just in time to profit by the fortunate impulse given to engraving; he saw his best works faithfully reproduced, indeed few masters of the French school were more fortunate in their engravers. At no other time could France boast of so many talented engravers, the names of Benoît Audran, Laurent Cars, Nicolas Cochin, Michel Aubert, Nicolas de Larmessin, Ph. Lebas, Jean Moyreau, Louis Desplaces, and of Bernard Lépicié, are guarantees for correctness of reproduction.

We will now say a few words on the processes employed by these engravers in their scrupulous copies of painters' compositions. Like their master, Gérard Audran, they began with etching, and only

Fig. 29.—A Costume. Etching by A. WATTEAU.

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used the graver after the outline was correctly drawn by the aquafortis, they then retouched the parts which were to stand out, shaded the figures, finished off the accessories, never sending their plates to the printer until they were sure that their work corresponded exactly with the painting before them. We are indebted to this mode of proceeding for some remarkable works, and although the greater number of Watteau's paintings have now disappeared, we are fortunately still able to appreciate this most spirited master, to whom posterity was for so long indifferent.

Amongst these many highly gifted and faithful engravers of the eighteenth century there are some few who deserve special mention. Laurent Cars, for instance, who was born at Lyons in 1702, and died at Paris in 1771, gave proof of his adaptive talent and great facility in his 'Venetian Fêtes' and 'Fortune-teller' after Watteau, and in 'Hercules and Omphale' after François Lemoine. Nicolas de Larmessin rendered the 'Pilgrims of the Isle of Cythera' by Watteau with admirable fidelity, and obtained admission to the Academy by his portrait of 'Guillaume Coustou' after Jacques de Lien; Jean Moyreau, who reproduced almost all the works of the Dutch painter, Philip Wouverman, softened his style a little in copying the paintings of his contemporaries; Louis Surugue had the good sense to take all his models from living masters, who could guide him, and this precaution saved him from ever producing inferior works; he was

quite equal to rendering the paintings of Antoine Coypel, François Boucher, G. B. Pater, or Watteau, and he often gave a harmony to his engravings which the originals did not possess; finally, Girard Scotin, who spent the greater part of his life in England, in his engravings after Watteau of the 'Pleasures of the Ball,' the 'Hardships of War,' 'Le Lorgneur' and 'La Lorgneuse,' and the 'Cascade,' proves that his correct drawing and plastic graver were uninjured by his having worked for publishers who were not particular as to what works they ordered from him. But he owes his fame to copies of superior models, for his works produced in England would not have made him celebrated. Watteau's imitators were equally attracted by the works of Boucher, Lancret, and Pater, and as ready to reproduce them. They had some qualities in common with those of Watteau, and they sold well. If these engravings after relatively inferior artists are less admired by connoisseurs than those after Watteau, it is the fault of the paintings rather than of the copies, for the artists were in all cases scrupulously faithful to their models. Boucher's designs, which were much run after, led his fellow-countrymen to introduce a style of engraving which had not hitherto been practised in France. We allude to the fac-simile reproductions of drawings which copy even the faults and mistakes of the artist. Giles Demarteau, Jean Charles François Bonnet, Christophe Leblond, and Gautier Dagoti, struggled, each by a special process,

to obtain in engraving an exact reproduction of a sketch or of a picture, and they sometimes succeeded. Although these fac-similes cannot deceive experienced men accustomed to study works of art, they give so just an idea of the originals that it is possible by their means to study the master's style and follow his mode of working.

Jean Baptiste Simeon Chardin, who stood almost alone in the eighteenth century, but has had many imitators since, attracted engravers, who rendered the firmness of his painting and the easy grace of his figures with praiseworthy fidelity. Bernard Lépicié must be counted amongst those who best caught the expression of the face in Chardin's works. His engravings after the 'Teetotum,' the 'Raker,' and the 'Governess' are very correctly designed, and have as harmonious an appearance as the originals. Laurent Cars, Charles Nicolas Cochin, Fillœul, Lebas, and Surugue also took their inspiration from Chardin's works. Whether these engravers worked under the master's supervision, or were so imbued with admiration of his bold and fascinating paintings that they required no assistance, we may assert without fear of contradiction that few artists were so fortunate as Chardin in their interpreters.

Several French painters of the eighteenth century took the needle into their own hands and produced some etchings quite equal in point of merit to their paintings. The Coypels,—Noël (1628–1707), Antoine

(1661–1722), Noël Nicolas (1688–1734), and Charles Antoine (1694–1752), used etching. None of them left engravings worthy of notice. Their works of this kind are little more than sketches, and it would be unfair to judge of these painters by their hasty etchings. Honoré Fragonard, whose numerous paintings, long neglected, are now overrated, was a clever engraver, and deserves to rank high amongst the many witty artists of the eighteenth century. His four 'Bacchanals,' and his 'Armoire,' not to speak of other compositions, have earned him this distinction. He did not think much of the exact form of objects or figures, but he expressed life happily. He generally treated frivolous subjects only, and we must admit that he invented them with great facility.

Gabriel de St. Aubin drew all that took his fancy. He made clever and spirited sketches of all that most interested him in every collection of works of art which he visited. He appears to have been an intelligent observer who foresaw with what avidity the smallest historical facts relating to the eighteenth century would one day be sought after. He used the needle with as much ease as the pencil. His 'View of a Saloon in the Louvre in 1753,' (Vue du Salon du Louvre en 1753), the 'Fair of Bezon' (La Foire de Bezon),' 'The Burning of the Fair of St. Germain (L'Incendie de la Foire St. Germain)' and the 'Theatre of the Tuileries (Le Spectacle des Tuileries),' are all executed in a delicate and sprightly manner

Small as they are they please and amuse us, because they truthfully and unpretendingly reproduce the spots which St. Aubin knew so well. Jean Baptiste Pierre engraved several of his own designs, and preserved the memory of a Chinese masquerade got up at Rome in 1735 by the pensioners of the Académie de France. His best etchings are four compositions suggested to him at Subleyras by La Fontaine's tales, 'Brother Luke' the 'Courtisane Amoureuse' (the Amorous Courtesan), the 'Falcon,' and 'Brother Philip's Geese.' Loutherbourg passed a great part of his life in England, and in this long absence from France he compromised his national originality, and some of his engravings seem to have been inspired by Hogarth rather than by any French artist. Antoine Rivalz was born at Toulouse in 1677, and died in 1735. He embellished the 'Treatise on Painting,' by Bernard Dupuy du Grez, with four etchings which remind us more of Lebrun's manner than of that of the pleasing masters of the eighteenth century. Hubert Robert executed in a very picturesque and spirited manner a series of twelve engravings, the 'Soirées of Rome,' dedicated to a female artist, Marguerite Lecomte. He took lessons of Claude Henri Wattelet, and with him engraved a number of etchings of no great merit, which might be signed by either the pupil or the master. Wattelet, the author of the 'Dictionary of Painting,' justly valued on account of the comprehensive information it contains on art and artists of

all times and countries, and its just and clear criticisms, was but an inferior painter, better able to recognise the talent of others than to exercise personal influence over artists. Thomas Desfriches was born at Orleans, and was scarcely more than an amateur, although he took some spirited views on the banks of the Loire. L. C. de Carmontelle, a writer of merit, engraved some portraits with great intelligence, showing rare knowledge of physiognomy. The Count of Caylus, an archæologist and celebrated man of letters, drew with ease, and devoted his talent to reproducing a number of designs of antique objects, and engraving a few original compositions. He had not, it is true, any great appreciation of antiquity, or a very profound comprehension of masterpieces, but his works are illustrations of many different styles, and he evidently had a true love of beauty. One quasi-royal hand deigned to practise engraving—we allude to the Marquise de Pompadour. Besides a number of engravings after lithographs by Jacques Guay she has signed three or four plates which would not be unworthy of famous engravers. In them we see children blowing soap bubbles, drinking milk, or resting in the country, and they are engraved with so much ease that we should not be much surprised if it should turn out that Boucher, Cochin, or some other master, had aided the powerful marchioness, and for politic reasons allowed her name to appear at the foot of the work instead of his own.

We have already said that the French were particularly successful with portraits. In the eighteenth as in preceding centuries artists carefully preserved the likeness of every person of rank or talent in their day. Engravers sprung up around every distinguished painter, eager to reproduce his works. The Drevets, father and son, generally took their models from Hyacinthe Rigaud and Nicolas de Largillière, and their engravings may be said to be in all respects worthy of the original works.

Pierre Drevet, the father, studied in the school which immediately succeeded that inaugurated in France by Nanteuil and Edelinck ; he conceived the idea of rendering in their full size the masses of drapery which surround and almost overwhelm the figures in the original painting. Of his many works we will notice the portraits of 'Jean Forest,' after Largillière, of 'André Felibien,' after Rigaud, and of 'Hyacinthe Rigaud,' after a painting by the master himself. The engraver copied the best works only, and was fully equal to his great task, rendering these pictures so instinct with life, with manly energy.

The portrait of Bossuet by Pierre Drevet, the son, after Rigaud, immortalises the name of the engraver, and gives a most exact likeness of the great orator. We like to fancy the illustrious prelate standing, leaning on his *Oraisons funèbres*, his episcopal robes wrapped majestically around him, captivating the crowd or the royal assembly he is addressing by his

noble presence; and the engraver, doubtless inspired not only by Rigaud's superb portrait, but also by the grandeur of the man himself, has produced a masterpiece worthy to rank with the finest engravings of the French school. Pierre Drevet, the son, employed processes much resembling those used by his father. He too used the graver alone, but it was so completely under his control that it adapted itself readily to the exigencies of different forms and styles. His stuffs always fall in rich and heavy folds, they are most artistically arranged and engraved in wide strokes, whilst the head and hands, which require greater precision of outline, are expressed by finer and closer lines, which allow of more perfect and condensed shading, bringing the important parts of a portrait into relief. Claude Drevet, who flourished later, employed the same process which his relations had raised to honour, with the important difference that his line engraving was often cold and disagreeably monotonous.

The engravers of whom we have spoken produced many portraits after Rigaud or Largillière, but other painters also supplied them with excellent models, we will name: Jean-Marc Nattier, Louis Tocqué, Maurice Quentin de la Tour, Jean Siffred Duplessis, Jacques Aved, and Tournières; Jean Daullé, whose work with the graver was certainly brilliant, took the Academy by storm in 1742, by his engraving of 'Hyacinthe Rigaud painting his Wife's Portrait.' Jacques Beauvarlet made the mistake of overloading his plates with

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monotonous lines. His portrait of the sculptor Bouchardon obtained him the title of Academician. It is neither his best engraving nor an exceptional work. Jacques Baléchou, whose style much resembles that of Beauvarlet, executed with some talent the portrait of M. de Julienne holding a paper on which Watteau's face is seen, after a painting by J. B. de Troy. This engraving is really superior to his more celebrated one after Vanloo's 'St. Geneviève tending her Flock.'

John George Wille and George Frederick Schmidt were both natives of Germany, but established themselves in France at an early age, and produced their celebrated works in that country. Our notice of them must be brief, as we have already spoken of them amongst German artists. Wille engraved numerous portraits after Tocqué and De la Tour, and several compositions after Terburg, Dietrich, and his son Peter Alexander Wille. His work is excessively neat, almost too much so, and his engravings have a wearisome metallic appearance, which does not do justice to the original paintings. French artists have never been guilty of either of these faults. Wille's figures, draperies, and furniture are all equally harsh; in looking at his prints we seem to have the glittering lines and shining hollows of the plate itself, before us. We must, however, admit that his execution shows rare talent. G. F. Schmidt shared the faults and talent of Wille; he too was an excellent line engraver, and many of his works justify his renown.

Two brothers, Pierre Charles and François Robert Ingouf, engraved together a numerous series of portraits which show little originality or practical skill. Charles Nicholas Cochin (Paris 1715—1788) engraved profile portraits, in round medallions, of all the great men of his day. The painter took great pains to give individuality to each face, but the real value of the work is obscured by the tiring monotony of so many heads engraved in the same circle. The engravings of Etienne Ficquet, Pierre Savart, and Jean Baptiste Grateloup stand with regard to portraits in the same relation that miniatures do towards historical painting. These artists engraved, with the aid of a very strong magnifying glass, some very pleasing portraits, which are now highly prized. Ficquet, the most skilful of the three, has left very good likenesses of Molière, La Fontaine, Corneille, and Boileau. P. Savart, like Ficquet's other pupils, could not attain to the delicacy of his master's works, and his name is now almost forgotten. J. B. Grateloup was so enamoured of fine strokes that he tried to imitate with the graver the work produced by the *rocking tool* balanced on the metal ; he spent his whole life over nine engravings, and we do not wonder that he became blind when we examine his portrait of Bossuet after Rigaud's painting, which, should it possess no other merit, has that of being a feat of great dexterity.

In the eighteenth century appeared a new style of illustration until then unknown, we allude to vignettes.

They were small, it is true, but well suited to the literature of that period. By a vignette we understand an engraving of small dimensions illustrating a text, a poem, or a romance. Artists produced such spirited and clever vignettes that a taste for them was created, and scarcely a book appeared which did not contain several plates intended to fix on the mind of the reader the principal scenes in the book. Hubert Gravelot, who was undeniably the best designer of vignettes, illustrated, as we should say now, the 'Moral Tales of Marmontel,' the 'Décameron' of Boccaccio, and the 'Works of Corneille.' The grace which distinguished his compositions was faithfully rendered by his engravers, Laurent Cars, J. Ph. Lebas, Cl. Duflos, Choffart, and Aug. de St. Aubyn. It is true that the designer has represented the heroes of Corneille and Boccaccio in rooms decorated in the fashion of his own day, with gilded ceilings and decorated with flowers ; but we can forgive these anachronisms on account of the spirited composition of the whole, and the faithful record the artist has left us of the interior decorations of his time. In these finely conceived and well drawn engravings we have comprehensive information of the manners and customs of the French in the eighteenth century, that age of rapid decline and general recklessness. Eisen drew less correctly than Gravelot, but holds a good position nevertheless. His designs in the 'Metamorphoses of Ovid,' engraved by Nic. Ponce, Delaunay, Baquoy,

Ghendt, and Noël Lemire show both inventive power and ability in interpreting the ideas of others. P. P. Choffard was pre-eminently successful in composing and engraving designs for tail-pieces and head-lines; invitation cards, addresses, or frames for maps, and his skill in these inferior works did not prevent him, when occasion required, from drawing in an agreeable manner several compositions the subjects of which he took from contemporaneous writers. A few years before his death he published a 'Notice of the Art of Engraving in France.' In it he not only proves his practical ability, but also his love of his profession and his respect for the masters who preceded him. This work, small as it is, contains some very wise observations, which are valuable from such an artist as Choffard. Marillier, Augustin de St. Aubin, Noël Lemire, Delvaux, Tilliard, Simonet, and Longueil, engraved their own and others' designs. Their works show that they were all influenced by Gravelot and Eisen, but many have also considerable individual merit. Moreau the younger at first followed the example of his predecessors, and produced some excellent and spirited vignettes at the end of the eighteenth century; but unfortunately he was afterwards led astray by an evil influence which altered his style and seemed to paralyze his powers. His engravings in the 'Songs' of Laborde, the 'Judgment of Paris,' a poem by Imbert, and the 'Good Soldier,' by Boussanelle, sparkle with wit and are arranged with ease, whilst his engravings

for the 'Holy Bible' and the 'Metamorphoses of Ovid' are pretentious and laboured. When Moreau composed the vignettes for the latter works, David was the reigning master, and his reforms were largely influencing the taste and style of the French school. Moreau the younger, vainly endeavoured to go with the stream, he could not conform to rules so different from those which had guided his early efforts, and in the attempt he entirely, or nearly, lost the dexterity, the spirit, and the elegance for which he had been famed.

These designers of vignettes, who have left us such trustworthy records of interior decoration in the eighteenth century, were not equally successful with architecture. Decorators by profession, such as Gilles Marie Oppenort, Juste Aurèle Meissonnier, Babel, and Baléchou have, however, left some engravings of their designs, which are good guides to the student of the style of that period. We must not now detain the reader by discussing the singular tendency of the eighteenth century, their contortions of even the smallest mouldings, and their dislike of a straight line, which was one of the peculiarities of the art of this period; we will merely notice, that in default of superior taste and love of simplicity, the architects of that day were certainly most skilful decorators, and the artists we have named above were good interpreters of their productions, and have transmitted exact and complete records of their works.

We have purposely refrained from speaking of Jean Baptiste Greuze at the same time as Watteau, Lancret, Pater, and Chardin. He belonged to the school of the eighteenth century indirectly only; his works, with the exception of his portraits, are pompous and theatrical. His best subjects are taken from domestic life, but he did not altogether succeed with them. The 'Paternal Malediction,' the 'Village Bride,' the 'Reading of the Bible,' the 'Paralytic waited on by his Children,' are pure melodrama with him, and he seems to have missed the simplicity and the homeliness which, in the eighteenth century as now, must have characterised family life. In painting, he contrasted colours without entirely blending them. Some engravers endeavoured to imitate him. Jean Jacques Flipart (1723–1782) employed etching almost entirely, and tried to counterfeit the bold dashes of a thick brush with a needle, using the graver merely to deepen the coloured parts and to finish off the engraving. His best engravings, the 'Village Bride,' the 'Paralytic,' and the 'Twelfth Cake,' are in this style. P. C. Ingouf worked in the same manner, and succeeded equally well. The 'Peace of the Household' and the 'Good Teaching' show practical ability, and an evident desire to be faithful to the painting. Jean Massard profited by the lessons of his master, George Wille, and gave proof of talent in the 'Broken Pitcher,' the 'Benevolent Lady,' and the 'Well-loved Mother.' Jean Charles Levasseur produced good engravings of

the 'Stepmother,' the 'Destroyed Will,' the 'Little Scapegrace,' and 'Youthful Study,' which give a very just idea of Greuze's paintings. Numbers of engravers contributed greatly to the fame of this artist's works, and he was most fortunate in finding so many skilful interpreters in his own time. Great and exaggerated as was Greuze's success, his conventional and pretentious manner of treating domestic joys and woes was imitated by few. Not more than three or four artists, J. E. Schenau, Et. Aubry, and P. A. Wille, took their line from him; but after this brief delusion, a new era, inaugurated by Louis David, began for art, and models were sought for in the works of antiquity. Engraving followed the example of painting; it left for ever the quick and easy style, and once and for all aspired to compositions of a high order, such as suited the earnest, reflective, and docile genius of the French.

Nevertheless, the return to the study of the antique was not accomplished in a day. So radical a change required a transition state. Liberated society, long oppressed, was unsettled for a time, and it was the same with art. The Count of Caylus was the first to endeavour, by his writings and engravings, to make the beauties of antiquity and of the Renaissance known and appreciated. Jean François Peyron was equally zealous in the good cause. He engraved some of Poussin's works, and brought out original compositions in the same style. Joseph Marie Vien followed up Peyron's efforts, and assumed the subdued manner.

He attracted many young artists by his talent, but he could not carry out the noble work. He has but the honour of having guided the first efforts of the artist who was to exercise such long and despotic influence over French art, and to lead it on to its glorious destiny. We allude to Jacques Louis David, who had very many pupils, but, strange to say, is perhaps the only one of the great masters who did not attract engravers anxious to reproduce his works and to share his renown.

The Revolution so entirely absorbed public attention, that, during the Republic, art was exclusively occupied with the events of the day. The chief aim of engravers was to supply the public with news, and they generally rapidly etched the outlines of their subjects, leaving the rest to professional colourists, who added flat tints to each proof. These coarse representations are of no artistic value, but they may be consulted with profit by an historian interested in the smallest actions of a great nation in a state of transition. Some few artists excelled in this style of engraving, and produced creditable works. Duplessis Bertaux, compared by his contemporaries to Callot, engraved an immense number of the events of the Revolution. His etching was delicate, often spirited; he was most skilful in arranging complicated compositions, but when he had to deal with larger figures than usual his power deserted him, and his drawing became heavy and very incorrect. In this he resem-

bled his predecessors, the engravers of vignettes, who thought more of general harmony than of correct detail.

Louis Philibert Debucourt (1755—1832) was the cleverest of the engravers of the Revolution. In the years before and after the death of Louis XVI. he engraved in colour the 'Garden of the Palais Royal,' the 'Gallery of the Palais Royal,' the 'Shrubberies,' the 'Compliment,' 'Annette and Lubin,' and several other familiar subjects. He was of an observing and inquiring mind, and had decided talent for engraving. At first, he obtained excellent colouring by means of successive plates; his spirited drawing was well suited to this process, which, in his hands, fulfilled all the requirements of art. When the storms of the Revolution were over, Debucourt attempted a totally different style, that of aquatint, with which, however, he was not equally successful. He now turned to the works of others in preference, and only occasionally produced anything original. He aged rapidly, and the engravings of his early life alone are worthy of study.

At this transition period, Sergent Marceau also distinguished himself by some spirited engravings, but he was not very fertile, and his works are now of little value. The other artists of the Revolution are scarcely worth mentioning; their works are interesting as referring to one of the most important eras of French history, but not from an artistic point of view. Suffice it to say that they are very numerous, and may be

consulted in public institutions, where they have been collected and carefully preserved.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the art of portrait-taking, which had been carried to such perfection, was almost abandoned in France. An engraver named Quenedey invented an instrument which mechanically reproduced the human profile on copper; the artist had merely to touch up the work of the machine, so that he could quickly and cheaply supply the public demand. The invention became so fashionable that few families were without likenesses in *physionotracy*. Pupils and imitators took advantage of Quenedey's success. Chrétien in France, and Saint Mesmin in America, engraved numberless portraits with a similar instrument, but as art was only an auxiliary in the process, these likenesses were all equally dull-looking, and very soon lost the brief favour they had enjoyed.

Before closing our review of engraving in France, we must speak of one artist who used etching himself, and employed two very clever engravers. Pierre Paul Prud'hon belongs as much to the nineteenth as to the eighteenth century. He himself transferred his charming design of 'Phrosyne and Melidora' to copper. There are evident signs of inexperience in this engraving. It is rather the work of a good painter than of an engraver. Louis Copia and Barthélemy Roger engraved Prud'hon's chief works under his supervision, and seem to have entirely caught the

spirit of the painter. Their line-engravings, which were finished off with well-distributed stippling, enable every one to admire the 'French Constitution,' 'Innocence beguiled by Love,' 'Innocence preferring Love to Wealth,' the 'Thirst of Gold,' and many other equally superior works, which might otherwise have been entirely lost, or known only to a few privileged persons.

The reform effected in art by David extended to engraving, which recovered its former splendour. Charles Clement Bervic (May, 1756—March, 1822) gave early proof of great talent for drawing. He was one of John George Wille's best pupils. Like his master, he employed the graver only, but his strokes are easier and more symmetrical, and his engravings have not the metallic appearance which we condemned in those by Wille. We know how justly successful were his 'Education of Achilles' after Regnault, the 'Rape of Deianeira' after Guido, the 'Portrait of Louis XVI.' after Callot, and the 'Laocoon.' In these engravings the artist has succeeded, by good management, in concentrating the attention on the chief parts of the composition, and they retain the value which every well-studied work must have in the eyes of good judges, and have been most useful examples to the modern French school of engraving.

Pierre Alexander Tardieu, who took lessons of Wille with Bervic, was almost equally talented, although he was less famous, and had few pupils.

His masterpiece, the portrait of the Earl of Arundel after A. Vandyck, may be considered one of the most remarkable works of the French school. This engraving admirably renders the bright and harmonious colouring of the great Flemish painter's work ; it is executed entirely with the graver, and the same process was employed as in Gérard Edelinck's justly admired portraits. P. A. Tardieu brought out an engraving after the dead figure of 'Lepelletier de St. Fargeau,' painted by David for the Convention Hall, which is now lost or carefully withheld from the public. The plate fared no better than the painting, it was destroyed, but the rare impressions from it which have been saved give us a very high opinion both of the original painting and of the engraver's appreciation of it ; the general style is subdued, and great knowledge of drawing is shown in the figure stretched on the bed. Antoine Alexander Morel took one of his best engravings from another of David's designs for the Convention Hall, 'Marat in his Bath.' We are indebted to the same artist for talented interpretations of the celebrated compositions of the 'Oath of the Horatii,' and 'Belisarius' by David.

Boucher Desnoyers' first works were of little value ; he employed a disagreeable and feeble kind of stippling, but later he conceived great admiration for Raphael. He at once saw that profound study of drawing and constant application could alone enable him to cope with the difficulties of the great master's

paintings, and with rare courage he set to work and recommenced his education. He began by superintending the publication of a collection of copies from old pictures, but as soon as he felt himself master of the difficulties of drawing he ventured to engrave 'La belle Jardinière' after the painting in the Louvre. He was completely successful, and his fame was at once established in a brilliant manner. Orders flowed in on every side, and in a few years he successfully engraved the 'Portrait of the Emperor Napoléon,' that of 'M. de Talleyrand,' and 'Belisarius' after Gérard, the 'Madonna della Sedia,' the 'Madonna di Foligno,' the 'Vierge au Linge,' the 'Vierge de la Maison d'Albe' after Raphael, and the 'Vierge aux Rochers' after Leonardo da Vinci. This fertility is the more surprising when we note the care and delicacy of the execution of the smallest details in Boucher Desnoyers' engravings. He interpreted Raphael's paintings better than any of his predecessors. The 'Transfiguration' was his last work. When his powers were already failing him, he determined once more to testify his admiration for the great painter who had, so to speak, filled his life. He therefore composed an 'Appendix to the History of Raphael,' published by Quatremère de Quincy, in which he showed his undying love and unfading appreciation of the master of his choice.

Boucher Desnoyers is not the only distinguished engraver of the nineteenth century. Messrs. Forster,

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Martinet, Calamatta, and Mercuri rank high in the school; and M. Henriquel-Dupont, author of 'The Lady,' after Vandyck, 'Lord Strafford,' 'The Portrait of M. Bertin,' and the 'Hémicycle du Palais des Beaux-Arts,' has recently shown in his 'Disciples of Emmaus' that his powers are still at their zenith, or, if we may so speak of a master, that they are even on the increase. This new work, executed with ease and consummate skill, should, we think, be considered a masterpiece, and as such it is a good study for artists who still care to work at engraving, which is now superseded, not because there is less talent than formerly, but by the discovery of many mechanical processes, useful in their way, but fatal to the art of the engraver. At no other time were there more skilful artists of every kind in France. Messrs. François, Salmon, Rousseaux, Levasseur, and Huot appear likely to reproduce the line-engraving of better days. M. Gaillard devotes himself entirely to superior works, and renders their character and their peculiar beauty well on metal; M. Leopold Flameng has worked his way to the rank of a master; in a different style of art Messrs. Gaucherd and Jules Jacquemart have been pre-eminently successful. On every side engravers are working at etching, their only fault being their over haste to multiply their works; had they a little more painstaking industry, a little more study of drawing, they might become famous, and even found a true school of etching in France.

Our work must now close. We have seen how French engraving drew its inspiration now from Flanders, now from Italy, but speedily became a national art with characteristic peculiarities. After being devoted for some time to the works of others, or to the reproduction of their own intelligent compositions, engravers turned to the engraving of history. They submitted themselves to the influence of Poussin and Lebrun. We have seen how they succeeded. This grand style suited them admirably, and they remained true to it in their interpretation of the works of the painters then at the head of the school. For a short while they turned aside, attracted by vignette engraving, in which, however, they were most successful. From the beginning of this century they have again been devoted to historical engraving, and to it they are indebted for their great renown. The glory which surrounds French engravers is well merited; in their skilful, bold, and powerful works have they not spread abroad the love of the beautiful? Did they not lead the way in the progress now being carried out?

CHAPTER VIII.

PROCESSES.

Engraving on Wood, Camaïeu—Copper-plate Engraving—Line Engraving, Etching, Dry Point, Combination of Etching and Line Engraving, Mezzotint, Aquatint, Chalk style, Engraving in Colour, Physionotracy, Heliography or Photography—Printing.

BEFORE closing our history of engraving and engravers it will be as well to say a few words on the many different processes employed. Engraving requires, above all, a thorough knowledge of drawing. Without it, an engraver may become a skilful workman, but never an artist. All the great masters in engraving have paid special attention to this branch of their art, and the most skilful were also talented painters. There are many different modes of engraving; the most popular are wood-engraving, line-engraving, and etching. The other processes are derived from these. We will consider them separately.

Engraving on Wood.—Wood-engraving is earlier than any other kind, it even preceded printing, properly so called; characters were engraved on wood before moveable types were invented. The first works embellished with woodcuts, the 'Speculum Humanæ Salvationis,' the 'Biblia Pauperum,' and others less celebrated, appeared at a time when manuscripts were becoming inadequate to supply the wants of the increasing number of readers. So great was the impatient and commendable curiosity awakened on all sides, that copyists could not work fast enough to supply the increasing demand; and this led to the printing from engraved characters on a block, but it was not then that engraving itself was invented. For the real origin of this art we must go back to the most remote times; the Greeks, the Egyptians, and the Romans cut inscriptions on wood or metal for the instruction of the people; but the secret of printing was still unknown, and it was the yearning for knowledge in the fifteenth century which led to its discovery. At the end of a few years moveable types were invented, and, of course, the entire mystery of printing was solved. Pictures were used from the first as being easily understood by the people and likely to impress facts on their minds. A wooden block was employed for taking off the first engravings, such as had been used for printing "letters of indulgence." Wood being easily cut, was at first employed by the "picture carvers," so called because

they cut strokes in the wood roughly, but which outlined their designs. The earliest woodcut with a positive inscription bears date 1418. The only known impression is in the Royal Library of Brussels. For a long time the 'St. Christopher,' with an inscription and the date 1423, was thought to be the first woodcut; the invention is now, however, moved back five years, and some new discovery may even yet fix it a few years earlier. This question is but of secondary interest to the history of engraving; artists look upon the first production of a really beautiful work as the true beginning of an art. The religious pictures brought out by poor engravers, who thought less of artistic beauty than of exciting devotion, could scarcely be called works of art. The work of the wood-engraver is as follows: with a very sharp tool he cuts away all those parts of the block of box or pear-tree wood which the designer has not covered; he must follow every line of the artist's drawing, cutting away the whites and leaving the blacks. He must never work independently, unless the strokes are not indicated, or a mere wash gives the shading in any object. The tools employed by a wood engraver are called burins, or gravers, scopers, needles, chisels, gouges, scrapers, and mallets.

Engraving en Camaïeu. — Engraving *en camaïeu* involves the same processes as wood-engraving, or, rather, it is a superior kind of wood-engraving. It may be as well to note how this superiority was

obtained. When printing was first introduced the only object was to multiply or counterfeit manuscripts, and printers generally left a small space at the head of each chapter for an ornamental initial letter or title. This they supposed would contribute to the illusion. Different tones were necessary to imitate painting; they therefore used blocks of wood inked separately with different tones, and clamped together so as to be printed from all in one. This combination of blocks led to the invention of engraving *en camaïeu*, which rapidly improved in the hands of skilful artists. A first block gave an exact outline of the form to be produced, a second provided the shadows, and the white of the paper was reserved for the lights. We must observe that, by the aid of an exact register, the second printing was taken upon the first impression. The first block gave the print the appearance of a pen-sketch, and the second that of a washed drawing.

We have now considered the process in which two blocks were used and three tones obtained—the outline, the shadow, and the light. This was the mode of working at first; later, by means of a greater number of blocks, the tints were multiplied and numerous gradations obtained. Two blocks were, however, sufficient to produce what is called an engraving *en camaïeu*. The word *camaïeu* thus applied is derived from *cameo*, a stone in layers of different colours, so much and so successfully employed in antique gem engraving.

Copper-plate Engraving.—This process is diametrically opposite to that employed in engraving on wood. In the latter all that is to be dark in the impression is left in relief, in the former the dark lines are cut into the metal plate, and the damp paper is subjected to so much pressure that it sucks up the ink from the hollows. Copper-plate engraving necessitates long and careful work, and somewhat intricate preliminary studies. Having made a correct drawing of the composition or figure to be produced on copper or steel, the engraver transfers his design to metal by means of an exact copy on tracing paper, which gives the outlines, the strong shadows, and the half-tints. This done, the artist begins to trace with the graver lines more or less deep, according to the amount of light required. These first strokes form the foundation of the subsequent work, and they require most correct and careful drawing. Sometimes the lines are crossed again, and yet again, to mark and shade the design more effectually. A stroke may be introduced between parallel lines when the shadows require deepening, or in engraving flesh, to avoid the unpleasing effect of too much lozenge or square-shaped shading. Sometimes the engraver avoids too abrupt a transition from light to shade by the use of dots, which soften the tone. Such, briefly stated, are the labours of a line-engraver, whose work is peculiarly well suited to compositions of a high order. Some artists have used the graver to improve the appearance and heighten

Fig. 30.—Studio of a Copper-plate Engraver, by ABRAHAM BOSSE.

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the colouring of their etchings. We will speak of them when we have considered the process of etching.

Etching.—We have said that line-engraving, which requires slow and careful execution and complete finish, is chiefly suitable for compositions of a high order; the easy and rapid process of etching, on the contrary, is best adapted to homely and familiar scenes or sketches, although artists of genius may occasionally employ it for grand conceptions. The process is as follows:—The plate of copper or steel is first moderately heated, and whilst it is held over the fire it is covered with a very thin coating of varnish coloured with lamp-black and adhering to every part equally. The engraver then marks out his sketch with needles of varying size, according to the depth of the stroke required, working on the varnish as he would on paper, with a pen or pencil. An incision is thus made in the varnish wherever marks are to appear in the print; and the plate is protected in those parts which are to be untouched and to be white in the impression. A border of wax is now raised round the plate, and nitric acid is poured over it, diluted with water, lest it should affect the plate too much, which would prevent the proper management of the biting in. When the acid is on the plate, it is as well to spread it about with a very soft brush, that it may act equally in every part. When the acid has thoroughly

done its work it is removed, the plate is cleaned, and the varnish taken off with a rag soaked in spirits of turpentine. The drawing, which before appeared on the varnish, is now seen in sunken lines on the metal. The plate goes to the printer, who takes a proof of it, by which the artist can judge of his work. If any

Fig. 31.—The Mountebank, etched by REMBRANDT.

parts are too much or too little accented, it is no great matter, the faults of a first biting-in can easily be remedied. A roller, saturated with varnish, is lightly passed over the plate, which is thus entirely re-covered ; the work is then gone over with the needle wherever it requires strengthening, and bitten in

again. Any lines too strongly bitten in the first time are rubbed up with a burnisher, a round tool used for that purpose.

So many facilities were attractive to painters, and numbers employed etching; it is the only mode of engraving which does not require preliminary study,

Fig. 32.—Vanity, etched by J. CALLOT.

experience is all that is needed to give firmness of hand and knowledge of effect, and this an artist who can draw will rapidly acquire. Although this mode of engraving is so very simple that any one may learn it, those who have excelled in it are few. The drawing being the chief thing, it is absolutely necessary to be a skilful designer before becoming a good etcher

It is essential, also, to have sufficient knowledge of chiaro-oscuro to be able to obtain all the gradations of light and shade by means of the black ink and the white paper. It follows that distinguished etchers are rare, and that in this, as in every branch of art, to excel in it is the exception and not the rule.

Engraving with the Dry Point.—By this we understand a process which generally accompanies, and often gives finish to, etching. The artist draws on the bare metal with a very sharp needle, thereby raising a burr, which leaves a very soft and delicate stroke. These burrs, which are so effective in Rembrandt's works, will not stand much printing from, and soon disappear. This is why the first proofs of engravings with a dry point are so much valued and fetch so high a price at sales.

The Combination of Etching and Line Engraving.—This kind of engraving must be noticed in a history of the art, because in it etching plays a secondary and preparatory part only. The engraver transfers an exact tracing of his design to the metal covered with a coat of varnish, which is obtained thus : the copy is pricked with a needle on a sheet of tracing paper, the holes are filled with coloured powder, generally red ; it is spread on the plate, and rubbing it with the nail is all that is needed to make an impression of it on the varnish. This first operation performed, the en-

graver goes over the lines in the varnish with a steel needle, passing over the clear parts and marking out the shadows, in fact, leaving nothing to be done after the biting in but the heightening, doubling or trebling of the hatching, as occasion requires. The sculptor, as we know, entrusts the rough hewing of the marble for his statue to a workman, who gives the general outline of the model supplied to him ; in the same way the engraver often takes up and completes the work in his own individual style when the mechanical part is done, allowing some clever pupil to prepare the plate and do the etching.

Mezzotint Engraving.—Horace Walpole, anxious to give the honour of the invention of this style to a fellow-countryman, tells us, in his 'Anecdotes of Painting,' vol. v. p. 161 (Ed. 1828), how Prince Rupert, the nephew of Charles I., was led to its discovery when living in retirement at Brussels, after the year 1649. "Going out early one morning, he observed the sentinel at some distance from his post, very busy doing something to his piece. The prince asked what he was about. He replied, the dew had fallen in the night, had made his fusil rusty, and that he was scraping and cleaning it. The prince looking at it, was struck with something like a figure eaten into the barrel, with innumerable little holes close together, like friezed work on gold or silver, part of which the fellow had scraped away.

"One knows what a mere good officer would have said on such an accident; if a fashionable officer, he might have damned the poor fellow, and given him a shilling, but the '*génie fécond en expériences*' from

Fig. 33.—A profile Portrait, Mezzotint Engraving by Prince RUPERT Palatine of the Rhine.

so trifling an accident conceived *mezzotinto*. The prince concluded that some contrivance might be found to cover a brass plate with such a grained ground of fine-pressed holes, which would undoubtedly give an impression all black, and that by scraping away proper parts the smooth superficies would leave the rest of the paper white. Communicating his idea

to Wallerant Vaillant, a painter whom he maintained, they made several experiments."

Unfortunately for the English historian, mezzotint engraving had already been invented for several years, and Louis of Siegen, a German officer, had employed it in 1643, for his portrait of Amelia Elizabeth, the Landgravine of Hesse-Cassel ; and a certain François Aspruck had engraved a series of thirteen plates of Christ and the Apostles, and one of 'Venus and Cupid,' which all bear the date 1601, by means of some process giving a result very similar to that obtained from mezzotint. "*Novo hoc in aere typi genere.*"

In mezzotint engraving the copper or steel plate is scraped with an instrument called a rocking tool, which requires careful balancing. It is a semi-circular steel tool much roughened at one end, which penetrates the metal and produces numberless little dents very near each other. When the surface is equally furrowed with this rocking tool, a scraper is used to soften the ridges more or less as the lights are to be stronger or fainter, and to remove them entirely when high lights are required. This is quite a different operation to that employed in other kinds of engraving. Instead of merely drawing all that is to be shaded in the impression, those parts alone are worked at which are to be removed or softened. There is a danger of imperfect results from mezzotint engraving. If not very carefully managed, the work

with the rocking tool may make the proof look spiritless and confused, the transitions from light to shade may so easily be slurred over that the greatest precaution is needed to obtain good and pleasing gradations of tone. Another thing which discourages the use of mezzotint is that the plate will not bear much printing from. After furnishing a few hundred prints the roughness obtained by the rocking tool, and which gives tone to the impression, becomes crushed in the press, and in some parts even disappears altogether.

Aquatint Engraving. — This process resembles mezzotint in its results, and is often confounded with it, but it is in reality quite different. Instead of first furrowing the plate with the rocking tool, the engraver begins by tracing the outlines of his design on the bare plate, which he then sprinkles equally with very fine sand or resin from a sieve. Resin is preferable to sand or anything else, as it adheres readily to the plate when slightly warmed. The acid slowly but plentifully poured on to the surface thus prepared corrodes all the imperceptible spaces between the grains of resin, and this mass of similar and equidistant dots makes the print look soft and harmonious. The tone produced resembles that of a washed drawing to such an extent that the first aquatint engravings by J. B. Leprince, the inventor (about 1787), were often taken for washed drawings. The art has

been perfected since the time of Leprince, and some able artists have obtained admirable results from it.

The Chalk Style supplies a modern demand, and was really invented by François and Dumarteau, although the origin may be traced back to John Lutma. The imitation in engraving of the effect of chalk on the grain of the paper allows of the multiplication of fac-simile copies of the handiwork of the greatest masters, which are most accurate and excellent, and therefore very useful to collectors and young artists, serving them as models and guides, without which they would err inevitably. To obtain these fac-similes the engraver uses a revolving wheel or *roulette*, which is a small cylinder of steel turning on an axle fixed to a handle and proportioned to the size of the stroke about to be produced. The outer part of this little wheel is covered with sharp teeth, which bite the varnished copper in several places at once. When the aquafortis has acted on this first work, the artist, with the same instrument, retouches on the bare copper those parts he wishes to mark more strongly. A tool with the end unequally roughened, which produces similar effects to the roulette, is sometimes used. To give the appearance of drawings in red or bistre, the greater number of François and Demarteau's engravings have been printed in red or brown, thereby aiding the illusion.

Engraving in Colour naturally followed the chalk

style, and the process is rather like that of engraving *en camaïeu*. It was invented by James Christopher Leblon, an artist of Frankfort, who conceived the idea of printing on the same sheet of paper from plates impregnated with differently coloured inks. By means of an exact register he was able to print the colours in the correct places. He obtained surprising results, and executed a portrait of Louis XV. which at a distance might really deceive the most experienced eye. To imitate drawings he employed the same process as François and Demarteau. The only difference between the two styles consists in the variation of tone obtained by means of superposed printings. Engraving in colour has been practised by many skilful French artists. It has not succeeded entirely with figures, but it is worthy of attention, as many subjects from anatomy and natural history, and monuments of many-coloured architecture, could not have been well rendered without great expense by any other process before the invention of chromo-lithography.

Physionotracy.—At the end of the eighteenth century a French artist named Quenedey invented a machine by means of which he copied the human profile mathematically. The outline alone was fixed on the copper in one unbroken line, and the artist shaded and worked out the shape with sufficient skill to give a certain appearance of truth to the physiognomy. His invention had great success at first, but for a short time only.

Photography.—Photographic engraving is a modern invention. To M. Niepce de St. Victor belongs the honour of having discovered how to print a photographic proof like a copper-plate engraving. He was the first to obtain satisfactory results, but he had the advantage of the experience of many wise men and of his uncle Nicéphore Niepce, whose researches were cut short by death. Photography has made great efforts in this direction. Messrs. Riffaut, Ch. Nègre, Baldus, Durand, and Garnier have brought out excellent proofs, obtained by some secret but evidently very effective process, and we think we may now look upon all difficulties as conquered. Still better results will doubtless be obtained, and engravers, to whom photography was a fatal blow, may console themselves with the thought that there are some difficulties which art alone can master, and with which the most perfect mechanical process is unable to cope.

Printing.—The printing of engravings, of whatever kind, always requires great care. Wood-engravings, generally combined with the text, are printed like letter-press. In his 'Grammar of the Arts of Design,' p. 695, Charles Blanc speaks with his usual clearness of the care required in printing wood-engravings with the text: "One thing is wanted," he says, "in early woodcuts, the finish now given to them in printing by a contrivance called *découpage*. By attaching portions of paper or pasteboard, of suitable thickness, to certain parts of the *tympan* (a thick sheet of leather through

which the pressure is applied to the wood block) more or less pressure is obtained on the different parts as required. If it be necessary to bring forward the foreground of an engraving, a pad is applied to the part corresponding therewith, and to throw back the distance a thin slice of the pad is removed, which softens the pressure, lessens the quantity of ink, and thereby lightens the tone."

The process of printing is quite different in copper-plate engraving. We have already stated that all that is to appear in the proof is engraved in sunken lines. The paper, which is first damped or soaked, is pressed hard enough to suck up the ink from the hollows. Having placed the plate over a fire which slightly heats it, the workman fills the engraving with ink in every part, he then carefully wipes the plate with a pad of thick muslin, so as to remove the ink where it is not wanted, and proceeds to rub whiting over the metal with the palm of his hand until it is quite bright. Thus prepared the plate is laid upon blankets, the damp paper, which is to receive the impression, is spread upon it, and with all its accessories it is passed between the rollers, the flannels preventing undue pressure, and a proof is obtained which must be carefully removed, as the ink makes it adhere a little to the metal, and the paper is still damp. To remove any ink that may have remained in the lines, the printer cleans the engraving with spirits of turpentine, and proceeds as before.

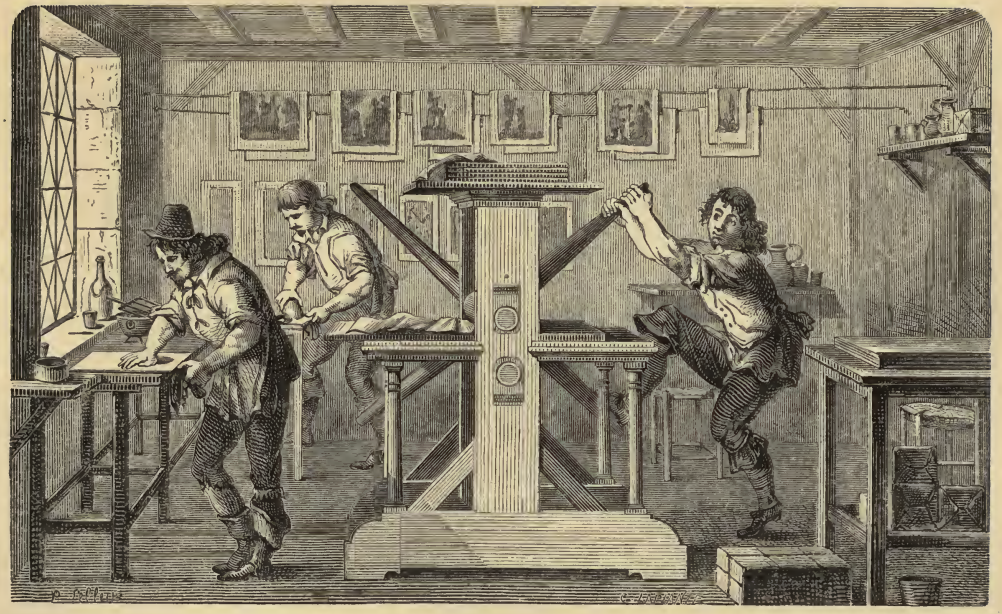

Fig. 34.—Copper-plate Printing, by Abraham Bosse.

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To omit nothing we ought perhaps to explain the numerous processes by which peculiar effects are produced in printing engravings. But this would detain us too long. Suffice it to state that the printer, working under the supervision of the artist, may often be of great service to him. This co-operation, however, is only possible with etchings. In line-engravings there is little room for skill or management, everything is so completely finished that the printer has nothing to do but to spread the ink equally upon the plate so that the proof may exactly tally with the engraver's work upon the copper.

Some painters who employed etching took the trouble of printing their own engravings. By inking some parts more or less strongly they obtained different degrees of strength. Rembrandt, the master of etching, entrusted the printing of his engravings to no one, he reserved that task for himself. His skill in effects was so great that proofs taken from the same copper differ entirely from each other. Some, filled with ink and not much worked up, make the design look dark and gloomy; whilst others, lightly inked, throw it out and almost flood it with light.

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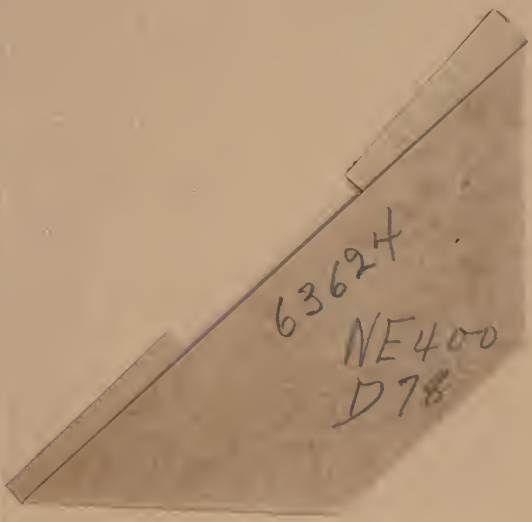

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